

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, &
Professional Papers

Graduate School

1989

Political literature and public policy in post-Mao China

Steve Gideon

The University of Montana

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Gideon, Steve, "Political literature and public policy in post-Mao China" (1989). *Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers*. 3248.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/3248>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1976

THIS IS AN UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT IN WHICH COPYRIGHT
SUBSISTS. ANY FURTHER REPRINTING OF ITS CONTENTS MUST BE
APPROVED BY THE AUTHOR.

MANSFIELD LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
DATE: 1989

POLITICAL LITERATURE AND PUBLIC POLICY
IN POST-MAO CHINA

By

Steve Gideon

B.A., University of Montana, 1986

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

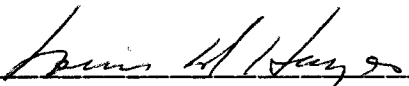
for the degree of

Master of Arts

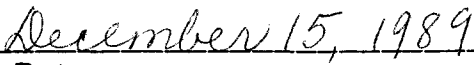
University of Montana

1989

Approved by


Chairman, Board of Examiners


Dean, Graduate School


Date

UMI Number: EP34343

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent on the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP34343

Copyright 2012 by ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This edition of the work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

Gideon, Steven A., M. A., May 1989

Political Science

Political Literature and Public Policy in Post-Mao China (229 pp.)

Director: Louis D. Hayes

The relationship in the People's Republic of China between the government and literature has had a long history. Public policy and literature provide a format for dialogue between government and intellectuals. Since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, the relationship between writers, intellectuals, and the government has begun to shift. Under Mao's rule, literature played a subservient role in the political discussion, and was used mainly as a tool of education. Since the takeover of power by Deng Xiaoping, literature has begun to act as a critical force in attempting to change public policy. The late 1970's and 1980's have witnessed a change in Chinese society which can be studied by examining the arguments of writers and their work.

In a one-party state such as the People's Republic of China, literature and the media have the potential to play a larger role than they do in two-party or multi-party states. Actions of the official government and the hierarchy between the central government and the provincial offices are complicated in China by the communist party's relationship with the governmental bureaucracy. The bureaucracy and the party have been accused of corruption and elitism. The public is often excluded from political discussion, and the connections between the party and the bureaucracy have become entangling and self-supporting to the extent that any criticism and call for reform from outside official channels are met with harsh reproval.

The role of literature since the death of Mao Zedong has begun to erode the authority of the party and the bureaucracy. Literature and the media in China have the potential to act as a force for reform, and can critique the government from the outside. The strength of literature comes from the support given it by the public. Literature as a tool for public criticism has been developed by the communists since the beginning of the twentieth century. The communist party initially was reliant upon literature for building a basis of support in the intellectual class as well as the peasants and workers. After 1949, the communist party utilized the potential of literature by molding it into a tool for public education.

Examination of literature from an historical perspective creates a foundation for the understanding of modern literature. In the recent past, literature was more or less a tool of the government; however, in the modern era it has become a much more potent force. In the absence of an opposition party, the press can and has been developing as a force for criticism as well as at times acting as a loyal opposition. Chinese literature has the potential to emerge as a foundation towards public control over the bureaucracy and the party. The tradition of radical literature in China has encouraged debate and discussion over public policy. In the future it appears that the media will play an even larger role in influencing public policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. ANTECEDENTS TO PRC LITERATURE	9
III. LITERATURE AND DISSENT 1949-1976	33
IV. THE CHINESE INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT: IDEOLOGY AND DIRECTION	80
V. CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE: POLICY AND DISSENT	128
VI. LITERATURE CONCERNING POLICY: PRO AND CON	168
VII. CONCLUSION	214
APPENDIX 1 The Evening Talks at Yanshan	227
APPENDIX 2 The Sixteen Point Decision	236
APPENDIX 3 Lu Xun and the Role of Intellectuals in Revolution	239
APPENDIX 4 Liu Binyan and the Role of Literature	241
APPENDIX 5 Letter from BSFU	249
BIBLIOGRAPHY	251

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The relationship in China between the government and literature has had a long history. The development of the modern society is based partly on the dialogue between members of the intellectual community and government officials. Since the death of Mao, the relationship between these two components has begun to shift. Literature has begun to take on a new role in influencing society. From 1949 to 1976, literature on the whole has been a tool of public policy. When intellectuals used literature to show discontent, as in the early 1960's, they were subsequently persecuted and victimized during the Cultural Revolution. In my opinion, the late 1970's and 1980's have begun to witness a change in Chinese society which can be seen by directing attention to literature. Literature reveals the criticisms and arguments of a powerful sector of Chinese society. Furthermore, in a one-party state such as communist China, literature and the media may even play a larger role, acting as a loyal opposition or criticizing the faults of the party and government. In order to understand the modern framework of literary discussion, literature and its content must be studied in context with the Chinese history and government. One goal of this thesis is to analyze contemporary communist literature with respect to its historical origins. To accomplish this goal, one must go back to the first two decades of this century. A second goal is to assess and analyze literature with respect to contemporary

political conditions. To do these, the content of literature as well as public policy must be studied.

METHODOLOGY AND SUBJECT MATTER

This thesis is an interpretive, historical study of the relationship between literature and public policy in China. Previous to 1949, the communist party was not as concerned with controlling all aspects of cultural society and allowed debate within the confines of the party. The leaders of the CCP were concerned with military and political questions. The origins of communist literature begin with the events surrounding the May 4th Movement in 1919. Lu Xun, a writer during this time period, was later claimed as the founder of modern Chinese literature.

After the CCP gained power in 1949, it began to solidify its power. Initially intellectuals were sympathetic to and supportive of the communists, and few ideological problems arose. With the Great Leap and its subsequent failure, intellectuals began to assume an adversarial role. Repression and censorship by the government following the 100 Flowers revealed the fragility of literature with respect to political movements. From the late 1950's to the death of Mao in 1976 literature played a subservient role. Public policy concerning literature controlled all aspects of publication and content, forcing writers to produce work approved by political leaders.

The moderates allowed much more literary freedom after 1976, partly to consolidate their own power. Public policy in China is at times ambiguous, partly because China is not a legalistic society in the western tradition. Contemporary public policy is a combination of law and the frequent campaigns and movements conducted by the government. These movements depend on the particular concerns of leaders at any one time. Literature may be used to act as a barometer of government policy. More importantly, it can reveal the interests of the public and reveals dissension and criticism within the political system.

Research for this paper has thus concentrated on an historical account of the development of communist literature as well as focusing upon some specific works of contemporary authors.

The interpretation and analysis in this paper focuses on the following questions: 1) Does the content of dissent reveal changes in public policy? 2) How does public policy react to dissatisfaction in the cultural sphere? 3) Has modern literature played a role in influencing public policy? This thesis is divided into seven chapters to organize the analysis of these themes and questions.

Following this introductory chapter, the second chapter reviews Chinese history and literature from 1911 to 1949 and traces the historical development of radical literature. The failure of the government to provide a solution to the threats from outside and within the boundaries of China provided an impetus to intellectual radicalization. The third chapter discusses the literary development from the creation of the communist state in 1949 to the death of Mao and the subsequent takeover by the moderates under Deng Xiaoping

after the fall of the Shanghai radicals. The historical discussion forms a framework for the analysis of contemporary literature. Chinese literature and the role played by the government in its development cannot be understood without emphasizing the historical precedents for modern actions. In this regard, the first chapter spends some time studying Mao Zedong as one of the early figures who has greatly influenced modern literature, both positively and negatively. China's radicals and the ideals that they promoted in the 1960's during the Cultural Revolution also need to be seen with respect to the previous two centuries. This study does not focus on the accomplishments of the communists under Mao in creating the Chinese state, but the discussion and support given the radicals by the intellectuals during the first half of the twentieth century reveals the strength of the ideological arguments and reveals the basis for the strength of the conservatives in the modern era.

Chapter four organizes the discussion of literature in the modern setting. It looks briefly at a number of components and themes which are important in approaching this topic. Literature and public policy carried out by the political leaders have to be seen with respect to certain terms, such as socialist realism and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. This chapter also provides a framework and discussion of public policy. The relationship between the party, government, and the intellectual community through literature has to be seen in light of the basic traditions and development of legalistic concepts such as freedom. Critical realism rising in opposition to socialist realism needs to be viewed in context within the larger framework of dissent and literature. Lu Xun

serves as one example of the role which writers have played throughout the twentieth century, as well as the use to which he has been put after his death. A discussion of these concepts furthers an understanding of the debate in the contemporary society.

Chapter five analyzes and organizes the development of modern public policy concerning literature. The study of public policy is done by emphasizing the goals of moderate government leaders and placing them within the context of the overall society, partly by referring to moderate intellectuals. The shifts of policy over the years since Mao's death will be discussed, revealing the political and social goals of the moderates as well as the liberals and the conservatives. Political trends aside, the development of literature can also be studied according to the network of law and forms of literature promoted by the moderates. The major focal points of this chapter include: political trends over the past eleven years, the focus on reform by the moderates, and the forms of literature rising during this time period.

Chapter six studies the development of literature over the same time period. It concentrates mainly on the liberal intellectuals and provides a discussion of certain examples which are used to point out important themes and objectives of writers and the media which do not agree with government policy. The basis for the strength of literature is the support given writers and their work by the public. This chapter thus includes a discussion of the larger political and social objectives of those without formal political power. Radical intellectuals are also referred to, as are those interested in the separation of literature from government control. The analysis of

literature takes into consideration more than literature, stories, articles, or fiction, in order to study the relationship and the increasing power of literature in the modern setting. Chapter seven closes the discussion with an overall statement concerning the place and power of literature in the Chinese society and a summary concluding the various issues, themes, and questions raised in the thesis. One note should be made about the terminology used to describe Chinese politics. It is often amorphous and confusing, and frequently shifts in an unsystematic fashion. It is difficult to provide a strict structural format as the Chinese political and literary community's use of labels and slogans is not systematic. The Chinese political system may use terms, such as liberal or radical, but they must be viewed in context within the Chinese limits of discussion.

FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSION

This thesis does not attempt to categorize each period or theme of Chinese culture into a specific category. On the contrary, part of the purpose of the paper is to reveal the complexity of the relationship and dynamics of the contemporary literary scenario. In this light, authors and their work can be viewed as individuals or distinct rather than as figures within a set framework. It is then easier to view the shifting public policy and the changing opinion of both government officials and writers.

However, in order to pursue a study in which Chinese literature and public policy can be more easily understood, there must be a basic framework within which to organize material. Otherwise, the task of understanding society would place the burden on a reader or writer to study only detail and to lose sight of the larger picture.

Chinese society has been broken down into six intellectual and political groups so that it may more easily be understood. Merle Goldman, in his book, China's Intellectuals, has identified four of these groups.¹ The first group is composed of radical government officials and party members. The second group consists of radical intellectuals who are patronized by the radical officials. The third group pointed out are moderate politicians, who act as patrons for the fourth group, moderate intellectuals. This thesis proposes that these components did play an important role, and still dominate much of the political and literary discussion, but since 1976 two other groups have begun to gain more attention. The remaining two groups have only recently emerged into the political and intellectual discussions. Liberal intellectuals are the fifth group, and writers and artists interested in the separation of literature and art from politics form the sixth and final group.

These components may be used to organize modern Chinese society into units which can be easily studied. When individual authors and their work are also taken into account, a clear picture emerges of literature and its role in China today.

¹ Merle Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Consent (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

Modern Chinese literature is bound up with the history of the Chinese communist party. The nature of literature and public policy prevents definitive answers from emerging which ultimately clarify the Chinese cultural and political society. This thesis points out certain trends which seem to be emerging in the late 1980's. Literature is becoming more of a factor in formulating a dialogue between the public and government bodies. The recent student demonstrations and the constraint shown on both sides were partially due to the recognition of the power of the printed word. Excessive and repressive actions occur when a government or group of individuals feel there are either no alternatives or that their actions will go unnoticed, and possibly accepted by other governments or citizens within the country. Literature in a one-party system can play an important role in shaping government policy, whether political, economic, or cultural. In my opinion, the recent actions have pointed to the possibility of a more stable and democratic political system.

CHAPTER II

ANTECEDENTS TO PRC LITERATURE

The literature of the People's Republic has a rich background, not just from leftist sources, but from traditional Chinese influences. This thesis is focused on the development and present role of literature in politics. Antecedents discussed in this chapter for the most part offer a background for the communist literary tradition in itself. A focal point for the development of the communist's particular style of literature arises from the May Fourth Period. Some of the intellectuals involved, especially writers such as Lu Xun or Mao reveal the ideals and the criticisms of the leftist movement before it played a prominent political role.

Ideals and plans for future political societies rarely, if ever, accomplish what has been set out in theory and literature as the goals for that society. The use of a study of literature is to reveal the intellectual background for the present day and in this way help to reveal the overall framework of discussion and dissent within contemporary China.

HISTORY AND LITERARY BACKGROUND: 1911-1949

The collapse of the Manchu dynasty in 1911 left a power vacuum which had to be filled. The discussion of what was to come next for the beleaguered Chinese people took many different forms. From domestic military hostility and foreign invasion to literary arguments, China was to spend the next forty years struggling for

political independence and self-sufficiency. What turned out to be the most important Party in twentieth century China began as a very small organization. The movement towards radicalization and construction of the communist party had an inauspicious beginning.

With the collapse of the dynasty, China's various provinces began seeking political independence or dominance over each other. Large organizations formed which became known as bandit groups. Workers also formed groups for their protection, such as the Green Band or the Red Band. But the most divisive factor after the collapse of the Manchu dynasty was not the development and rise to power of all these independent groups, but the threat of anarchy.¹

The initial struggle for power and stability coalesced around the military and dynastic dreams of Yuan Shi-kai and the western and political ideologies of those associated with Sun Yat-sen. The Chinese Republic was formed in 1912 with Sun Yat-sen as president. However, the political failures of the Republic (one example was the failure to reunify the country) and lack of support from other political and military forces led to its collapse. Yuan Shi-kai adopted the language of democracy and, with the backing of his Beiyang army, controlled the parliament and headed a new republic. The importance of the existence of the parliament should not be overlooked. The existence of parties supporting or opposing the group or figure in power left room for discussion and debate over the political future of China. There was already in 1912 the beginning of

¹ Jean Chesneaux, Francoise Le Barbier, and Marie-Claire Bergere, China From the 1911 Revolution to Liberation Translated by Paul Auster and Lydia Davis (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), p. 4.

a radical, leftist group within the United League headed by Sun Yat-sen.

The limited strength of the parliament was no match for the military and political power of Yuan Shi-kai. A second revolution aimed at overthrowing Yuan failed in 1913 and with his new monopoly of power created a dictatorship which lasted for three years. The radicals and intellectuals were forced to flee, Sun himself fled to Japan for refuge while the military forces in China consolidated their hold. However, Yuan's hold over society was deceptive. The weakness of the monetary and economic system, and the resistance from populous provinces prevented Yuan from gaining control over the country. China was torn apart by western economic treaties and threatened by Japan's emerging power.

The death from natural causes in 1916 of Yuan Shi-kai left the emerging military dictatorship without a head. While the radicals and intellectuals held little power, the military forces could not find a cause with which to unite their forces. Thus, the unstable situation acted to promote the weaknesses of the Chinese while providing opportunities for those who wished to exploit this instability.

The effect of these problems in the long run encouraged a new generation of intellectuals, especially radical theorists and writers. The collapse of the dynastic system led intellectuals to search for a new solution with which to create an independent China. The political and economic failures of China helped to create a sense of nationalism and identity which could be used to create a nation state.

When Yuan died, the political unit which he had created broke down into smaller political units, each ruled by rival military cliques.

Although the facade of a centrally organized republic was kept up, real power was diffusely spread throughout the provinces. The Chinese government was also dependent upon foreign powers, and with the vacuum left by the First World War, Japan emerged to play an increasingly important part in China's political development.

As the political instability of the central government threatened the unity of China, and as the foreign powers played a larger role in China's weakness, nationalism became an important force. The press became involved in supporting boycotts and political protests against the western powers.² Whatever nationalism binding the country together in this stage of China's development existed, it was offset by the provincialism and domestic struggle for power.

As the first World War increased the opportunities for economic development the Asian powers, especially Japan, began to take more control over economic enterprises in the Eastern hemisphere. China was stabilized somewhat with the increased world demand for silver, flour, silk, and cotton.³ However, there was little development of heavy industry except in Japan. There was some industrial development and a movement from the countryside to the city within China. The communist leaders today look upon this period as the "golden age of the Chinese bourgeoisie" because of the need in communist theory for a capitalist period.⁴

² Ibid., pp. 40-44.

³ Ibid., p. 50.

⁴ Ibid., p. 49.

Working conditions for the proletariat class were miserable. The continuing profit by foreigners and entrepreneurs led to strikes, especially with the inflation following the war.⁵

It is in this atmosphere that the intellectual development of the radicals emerged. The tradition of the radical intellectual in the modern, leftist mode began with the increase of education in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Many of the new intellectuals were educated in western and Japanese schools, and were trained to work in more modern societies than traditional China. Many of the young students were trained as lawyers, doctors, or journalists.⁶ As these people and their ideas gradually became more widespread, the conservative Confucian traditions exerted less and less influence.

These people did not form an early military, political, or even ideological threat to the Warlords at first. However, the political failure of those military leaders and the lack of the Chinese government to propose and carry out a solution for China's problems created room for a radical school. Many of the radical ideas of Chinese society came from the left wing in the Japanese society as well as from western Europe. The Americans contributed as well. John Dewey's influential pragmatic philosophy is still discussed in modern China.⁷

The new, educated and radical class used journals to spread their opinions and condemn the actions of the western powers and their failures after the end of the first world war. Activists were

⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

⁶ Ibid., p. 54.

⁷ Ibid., p. 56.

upset with the subservient status of the Asian countries in the wake of the war, especially in light of the failure of the western powers to satisfy the demands of Asian countries.

With the beginning of the Russian Revolution as well as the factors mentioned above, the Chinese radical movement gained support. Throughout the country, students and other young professionals were forming activist groups or societies. These minor groups quickly encapsulated the imagination of a large percentage of the population and became a major factor in the May Fourth Movement.

MAY FOURTH MOVEMENT

The May Fourth Movement lasted only two years, but the consequences of the movement have influenced China up to the present day. The power of literature in China is revealed by the number of writers, students, and professionals who later held influential government positions in the PRC. The movement itself was a combination of intellectual dissatisfaction and workers' strikes. While the intellectuals criticized the past and the present political leaders for not providing a solution, the workers provided the specific impetus for revolt against political leaders who were portrayed as holding progress back.

The worker's strike in Shanghai and the student demonstrations quickly spread throughout the country. The two groups suddenly found themselves with political power and, under

the influence of the Russian Revolution and marxists in Europe, the movement in China spread and took on a general anti-western view.

The purpose initially was to regain China's freedom and economic power from imperialist powers, but as the movement gained widespread support, other agendas were added. The Chinese intellectuals wanted to change the social and economic structure of society in order to create a democratic society. One of the outcomes of the May Fourth Movement was the creation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921.⁸

Initial slogans favored patriotic messages such as "save the country", "externally, struggle for sovereignty", and "internally, throw out the traitors."⁹ The failure of the 1911 revolution to bring about reform led to the mass eruption of public sympathy and support for these movements. Many of the people behind the Movement were also aware that they were fighting a struggle with their elders and with tradition as well. Old political and cultural values were seen as obsolete and were ridiculed by many of the short stories of the time. One example revealing the contempt many authors felt for society was the "The True Story of Ah Q" by Lu Xun who ridiculed outmoded feudal loyalties and faults of a corrupt society.¹⁰

As opposed to the later communists, the early members of the May Fourth Movement were very eclectic in their use of materials.

⁸ Lucian W. Pye, China: An Introduction (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), p. 88.

⁹ Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁰ Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (eds.) Selected Stories of Lu Hsun (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1981), pp. 65-112.

They took what they needed from many different cultures and ideologies, from the United States, to Japan and Russia. This eclecticism, however, was not to last long as the members of the rebelling youth searched for binding ideologies and commitments from which to act as well as to use as a basis for criticism.

Early struggle in the ideology of the revolutionary movement was based on the pragmatism of John Dewey. This school of thought was supported by Hu Shih, who argued for a practical approach not necessarily committed to one political ideology. Hu argued that the Chinese people should be able to form their government with respect to their own immediate circumstances.

On the other side was a small but growing force critical of western ideas and supportive of the new Marxist movement. According to the Chinese leftists, the peasant could play much the same role as the proletariat in the capitalist society. The radicals were supported by radical writers such as Lu Xun who were extremely critical of the past, and by other, less well known figures, Mao Zedong for example, who became involved in literary criticism during this time and who would eventually play a role in the Chinese Communist Party.

The May Fourth Movement itself was not important politically. None of these groups took over the government, and for the most part the labor disputes were quickly settled. But the traditions of dissent had been set, and the Movement began a number of different actions which would later trace their roots to it. These outgrowths of the May Fourth Movement influenced political, literary, and economic groups. The Communist Party was founded in the

aftermath of the Movement, and many of the critical principles of Chinese communist literature would be based on this time period. The period is also one of much controversy over how the figures involved should be interpreted.¹¹

The Communist party gained influence after Marx's work had been translated into Chinese. Russia sent representatives from its party to the Chinese to try to gain support for the Russian movement, but especially to solidify the respectability of the Chinese party and to align it with the larger independence movement in China.¹² There were a variety of communist groups. Chou En-lai, as a student in Paris, set up a party for Chinese students overseas. The party was split between those who thought the party should work within existing government for change, and those who wished to fight for immediate revolution. However, this was not much of a factor because of the small size of the party. Mao was among the first group at this time, the Russians advocated this approach as well.¹³

BREAKDOWN OF CHINESE SOCIETY: THE CREATION OF AN INTELLECTUAL VACUUM

As the minor political rebellions of 1919-1921 were defeated, Chinese society in the next few years began to break down further.

¹¹ The early twentieth century communist party members and intellectuals formed the basis for much of the material which would later be used by one faction or another to argue their point. During the Cultural Revolution in particular, many public figures of the early twentieth century and their work were reinterpreted.

¹² Cheneaux, Le Barbier, and Bergere, China From the 1911 Revolution to Liberation, p. 87.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 88-91.

The nationalists had a perfect opportunity to gain support against the imperialist nations, but now international financial agencies ruled much the same way the political authorities had in the past. China was indebted and made dependent upon foreign companies who could provide capital for development. There was also a huge foreign population which was extremely wealthy compared to the Chinese population. The government, being dependent upon these businessmen and foreigners, was put in an awkward position. The government was increasingly seen as a tool of foreign powers, with the possible exception of Russia, and popular literary movement gathered support for the radicals against the government.¹⁴

Local political leaders and landowners refused for the most part to help peasants, and the state itself added to this burden by trying to raise money, with increased taxes, for economic development. Added together, the weakness of the government seems apparent. Many peasants fought landlords, some fled to Southeast Asia, and most supported any effort to improve their lot, whatever the political system. ¹⁵

Obviously, the western model of development did not work. Corruption and exploitation were the rule, not the exception, in society. The Chinese government did not try to produce a society along western standards, and the cities which were developed had been done so in the most part by and for the western powers. The next few years were characterized by inconsistent rule by the

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 110. Russia gained the favor of the Chinese after the Bolsheviks took power partly because they renounced their extraterritorial claims on China.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 114-116.

Warlords and a steady, gradual shift in favor of revolution. The period of the Warlords could provide no solution for the political or economic problems, the political leaders of the time were for the most part too short-sighted and concerned with immediate political gains.

The Kuomintang (KMT) and the Communist party both gained in strength, although Sun's KMT was by far the stronger of the two. In order for the KMT to seize power, however, it had to develop a more radical and democratic party platform. It was obvious that a solution by the militaristic figures currently in power was not possible. With this in mind, the KMT reaffirmed Sun Yat-sen's three people's principles: nationalism, democracy, and the well-being of the people. These were aimed at foreigners, especially the western imperialists and the militaristic leaders. It was also a beginning step toward socialism by supporting the "people's well being." ¹⁶ Cooperation between the KMT and the communist party was known as the United Front. As the KMT seemed to affirm some of the socialist values, and as many of the communists argued that they could work within a system rather than only for violent revolution, the Front seemed an excellent consolidation of interests.

POLITICAL DESTRUCTION OF THE CHINESE STATE: CHIANG KAI-SHEK, JAPAN, AND SUN YAT-SEN

However, the United Front was short lived. On April 12, 1927, the nationalist forces under Chiang Kai-shek attacked communist and

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 156.

worker headquarters in Shanghai and attacked communists throughout the country.¹⁷ The nationalists were a strong military power, and the KMT, of which Chiang became the head after Sun's death, seemed to provide a potential answer to China's problems. The break with the communists, however, represented the first stages of Chiang's militarism.

The KMT gained strength after the defeat of the communists. The literature of the time continued to reproach the military activities of the KMT and urged the creation of a broader, more tolerant method of government. But the KMT had the upper hand militarily and seemed to be a party with a broad base of support. The high point of Chiang Kai-shek's rule occurred during the years 1927-1937, but the nationalists never did entirely control the country.¹⁸

Chiang had inherited the same problems as the previous warlords. International financial crises were regular. Domestic rivalry also reflected the weakness of the regime. Along with these already apparent weaknesses, the Japanese invasion in 1931 and the subsequent establishment of the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo further eroded support for the KMT.

These weaknesses were initially offset by the strong support shown for the KMT. The aim of the party itself was to consolidate its authority over the countryside, and there were many local leaders who felt the KMT had the best chance of doing that.¹⁹ The ideology

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 174.

¹⁸ Pye, China an Introduction, p. 140.

¹⁹ Cheneaux, Le Barbier, and Bergere, China From the 1911 Revolution to Liberation, pp. 188-190.

of the party tried to combine conservative Chinese traditions along with the new business outlook inherited from the western powers. Chiang proclaimed he was supporting traditional Confucian virtues. In this light , Sun Yat-sen's principles were revealed to be a progressive smokescreen for Chiang's militarism and conservative rule.

The new business class in China upheld the KMT and supported its ideology for the most part because it promoted the stability required to make money and expand industry. The communists lost power quickly under the repressive acts of the KMT, which forced rivals for power out of the official discussion of politics. Not all those supporting the KMT were conservatives or opportunists. Many within the party tried to reform corrupt labor or business practices. There were also many intellectuals including teachers, doctors, and lawyers who felt that the KMT was the answer to China's problems. For the most part the educated people who supported the party adopted the western model of development, and gradually aligned themselves with the western democracies for economic and military aid. ²⁰

These gains were offset by the lack of opportunities for the vast majority of the population, especially as Chiang tried to consolidate his political power at the expense of reform. The political and military weakness reflected by the Japanese invasion led to the increase in subversive movements. The major group opposing the nationalists was the communist party, which quickly

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 194-195.

pointed out its differences with the KMT and showed its concern for the peasant rather than for immediate political power.

Chiang Kai-shek's repressive measures towards the CCP led ultimately to the Long March, which, far from destroying the party, increased popular sympathy with the communists. The communists were quick to point out that Chiang was more concerned with defeating the internal rather than the external enemy.²¹ Towards the end of 1936, Chiang was kidnapped by a communist sympathizer. The KMT was forced to state that it would fight the Japanese rather than try to consolidate its own powers. The communists were forced to ally themselves with the KMT as well after Stalin proclaimed he would disassociate himself from the communists if they did not.

CHIANG'S FAILURE AND THE RISE OF THE COMMUNISTS

Chiang's fragile rule was destroyed by the start of the Greater East Asian War after the Marco Polo Bridge incident in 1937. The Second World War allowed Chiang to receive the total support of the allies, but his increasing autocratic and repressive measures only alienated the domestic population. Both the communists and the nationalists were preparing for civil war. The nationalists had the misfortune to be in power as the Japanese attained victory after victory over the Chinese forces. Chiang also used the political powers of the KMT to force taxes and concessions from the people without trying to gain their support for his policies. As a result the

²¹ Pye, China: An Introduction, p. 145.

population, especially in the occupied areas, became isolated from the KMT and supported the Communists who fought using guerrilla tactics.

The communists also heightened the ideological conflict. They shaped their policies so as to support and respect the peasants, who Chiang ignored for the most part. The communists gradually gained the support of the underclass by proclaiming their support for the common farmer. Many stories and writings during these years proclaimed that the sympathies of the CCP lay with the peasant and, as the alternative was the repressive KMT, the CCP quickly expanded.

The success of the communists was closely tied with the image they constructed since 1911. The May Fourth Movement and the struggle for survival, internally against the Nationalists, externally against the imperialist powers and later Japan, gave critical radical writers and intellectuals much needed public support. The communist ideology was formed by the combination of theory and the oppressive conditions of the time. The communist party itself had factional disputes and internal problems, but for the most part these were overcome in order to meet the needs for survival. What this meant in terms of developing an ideology was that the theory and literature of the communists acted to define the sense of the Party directives with those from whom it had to get support, the peasants.

Individual writers, party officials, and other intellectuals had varying opinions, but they all agreed that the repressive nature of their opponents forced the communists to adopt what became known as "communism with a Chinese face." The need for solidarity among

these intellectuals and the party formed an unusual alliance between the educated class and those who would rule the communist government. The party was reliant upon their work in order to gain peoples' sympathy and support. The party realized the importance of literature and began to take control over cultural and literary activities.

For the communists the relationship between cultural activities such as novels or short stories has always been one of the foundations of political support for the party itself and its actions. It is in this light that the concern and support for the direction and content of literature can be seen to have importance. The Cultural Revolution occurred not just to defeat a few political enemies, but also to address the larger issue of the direction of the party.

The May Fourth Movement was of particular importance because many figures later involved in the party gained recognition in the movement. This generation of authors would be continually reinterpreted and their work examined to see whether or not the themes discussed were orthodox. The political events of the first half of the twentieth century molded the opinions of those who took control over the government in 1949. As the generations involved in the takeover of power and the consolidation of the communist rule began to age and give way to a younger generation which was concerned with more than survival of the revolution and the message of the struggling peasant, it was inevitable that the intellectual arguments would shift and come into conflict with previous themes. The failure of the communists to expand technologically and economically led some to question the direction

of the revolution. The messages contained in literature and the focus of the intellectual class shifted towards possibilities for a greater prosperity and economic development. As the struggle of the 1960's involved reinterpretation of the early radical writers of the twentieth century, the content of the literature changed.

Mao Zedong has also been regarded as a writer and a poet, as well as the leader of the modern Communist party and state. His role in the literary sphere was thus both that of a participant and leader. Mao's role in the communist party was expanding as Chiang's influence waned.

Mao's early influence revolved around his writings which were mainly concerned with encouraging campaigns with which to revive ideological fervor to overcome the complacency of those in power. In this light, Mao can be seen as acting both as a radical who attacked the party bureaucracy and as a pragmatist who shut down radical activity when it went too far. Or, less appreciative, he may be seen as an opportunist. Chinese political and literary development since Mao's death has had a tendency towards the pragmatic.

Mao's role in the party and as a writer has to be viewed in a continuum. His life from the early twentieth century was witness to the actions of the warlord and the western nations who acted solely for their own interests. Thus the solution which Mao frequently wrote about and discussed throughout his life combatted the ideas which these two forces introduced. The solution had to have a vision, and it had to be outside the mainstream Chinese political life. Thus, Communism and the idealism of the Russian's proved to be the answer for Mao, as it was for many others.

The collapse of the Manchu dynasty in 1911 ushered in a new era of uncertainty and political struggle. The country would not be unified until the communist triumph in 1949. The specific historical events in this interregnum shattered the power base of the traditional elite. Thus, China was ripe for new ideas and a new form of government. Eventually the choices solidified into two major political groups, the communists and the KMT. After the Revolution the communists had defeated the KMT, and the political history of the People's Republic was begun.

Mao's youth was spent shaped by and trying to shape these events and the ones which were to follow. Mao was born into a rich peasant family in the province of Hunan. An agricultural community, it was far removed from the major centers of reform.²² Mao entered school at Changsha when he was eighteen years old. During his schooling, he came into contact with a larger literary tradition than the early romantic novels he had admired in his youth. His reading included Mill, Spencer, Montesquieu, and Rousseau.²³ With these as his guide Mao gradually became involved in labor movements, and considered himself a reformer rather than a socialist (a term he had not heard of yet, and would not until almost 1920).²⁴ Mao's first serious exposure to Marxist literature did not occur until as late as 1936, after the Long March.²⁵ Previously, he had been involved in the communist party and was for a time a

²² Dick Wilson, The People's Emperor, Mao A Biography of Mao Tse-Tung (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1980), Chp. 1.

²³ Ibid., p. 30.

²⁴ Ibid., Chapters 2-4.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 200.

member of the Central Committee. But his rise to power, and his influence as a theoretician, came as a consequence of the Long March and the relatively uneventful years from 1936-1940.

Mao's communist philosophy had a variety of sources. One source, and in some ways the most unusual, was the Taiping Rebellion. Christianity was the guiding light of the revolt rather than Marxism. Even with this difference, many of Hung Hsiu Chuan's (the founder of the Taiping Rebellion) goals resemble communism. Hung set up communes in which food, money, and clothing were owned in common.²⁶ Strict rules were set up; opium and footbinding were, for example, prohibited. The rebellion failed eventually, but still left a mark for communal reform, influencing the writing of Sun Yat-sen. Mao grew up considering both Sun's work and the Taiping Rebellion; the causes of that conflict and the Chinese attempts to overcome oppression were factors influencing Mao's theory.

The largest impact on Mao's philosophy came from the Russians. Lenin and later Stalin transformed Marxism into a particular framework. Mao returns time and time again to the theory in which particular conditions required that Marx's work be changed as the Russians did, that theory be changed into Chinese Marxism.

Mao developed the two stage theory of revolution. The stages were named New Democracy and Socialism. The first stage develops democratic capitalism which would eventually give way to capitalism. Capitalism will fall when the petty bourgeoisie and the

²⁶ Max Mark, "Chinese Communism," The Journal of Politics 13 (May 1951): pp. 233-234.

proletariat ally to defeat the capitalists. The problem for Mao was the inability for Marxism to succeed due to the lack of a large working class, or even the bourgeoisie for that matter. Mao had to turn to the peasant.

Mao utilized Lenin's idea of the Party as the vanguard of the revolution. His work "The Chinese Proletariat" reveals the weakness of the proletariat. The proletariat is still important in the industrialized cities. Mao explains in his writing that peasants were oppressed by the landlord class. He states that in feudal society the main contradiction is between the peasantry and the landlord class.²⁷ The peasant has the right to skip the capitalist stage and revolt, bringing on the advent of communism because:

...the Chinese proletariat is subjected to threefold oppression (by imperialism, by the bourgeoisie, and by the feudal forces) ...and consequently it is more resolute and more thorough-going in the revolutionary struggle than any other class.²⁸

The peasants have the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party to direct their revolutionary efforts.

Mao's work, though seeming to change due to changing historical circumstance, was actually based on only a few major concepts. The body of his writing was extremely similar to Sun Yat-sen's three principles of democracy, nationalism, and people's livelihood. Mao narrowed these concepts to fit his activities and renamed them: militarism, nationalism, and individual action. The

²⁷ Stuart Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 247.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 262-263.

difference between the two is revealed in the intent of the themes; Mao is more concerned with developing a basis for struggle, while Sun is focusing on the creation of economic and political stability. These principles were to be achieved during the period of New Democracy, which would eventually be overcome by Socialism. Thus, the founder of China's nationalism is also the spiritual founder of Mao's Marxism in its early stage. Mao stressed that in the period of democracy, the capitalistic productive aspect would be state owned. Mao makes the point of stressing a long democratic stage in his writings, which were published before 1949, but after 1959 he stressed the ability of the peasant to jump straight forward to communism.

Mao stressed in his work the idea that dialectical materialism allows thought to influence objective conditions. Only when the subject and the object are united in theory can the revolution hope to defeat the western idealism. What this means in terms of directing the Chinese revolution is that writing or literature as one major aspect of thought is extremely important in defeating capitalism and the KMT. Mao stresses the voluntary aspect of revolution by stating that:

men are not slaves of objective reality. Provided only that man's consciousness be in conformity with objective laws... the subjective activity of the masses can carry forward the revolution. In this sense, the subjective creates the objective.²⁹

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 135-136.

Mao was a figure in the CCP as early as 1923 when he was elected to the Central Committee of the CCP, and as leader of the People's Republic of China, he had substantial control of the political process until his death. The practical consequences of Mao's position can be symbolized by using his work, "There is no Third Way", which was written after Mao had consolidated power in the CCP in 1940. Before this time period he had faced a threat from Russian trained Chinese communists, specifically Wang Ming and the 28 Bolsheviks.³⁰ Wang had led the internationalist faction of the communist party and had Stalin's support. When Wang Ming was sent from Russia to Yen-an, he and his faction challenged Mao's power. Mao was threatened by the better educated and responded both by outmaneuvering this faction politically and defining his own theoretical position.

The threat Mao felt from a western or critical literary society was based on the idea that revolution was voluntaristic. Because the Chinese peasant was so far removed from Marx's conception of the revolutionary proletariat, there had to be a philosophic basis justifying the position of the peasant in China's revolt. Mao's work, "Dialectical Materialism" stresses the voluntaristic aspect of revolutionary action. When literature or other methods of interpreting Chinese history were offered, they were seen as a threat to this voluntarism. Mao's theory throughout his life was based upon struggle. Thus, when a contradictory argument or criticism was

³⁰ Wilson, The People's Emperor: Mao A Biography of Mao Tse-Tung, p. 161.

offered, Mao felt threatened and dealt with these movements by calling for further struggle.

Mao Zedong was the political head of China for an impressive amount of time. His death and subsequent campaigns against his "dogmatic thought" was most clearly exemplified in the debate on the Cultural Revolution. Lucian Pye summarizes the effects of the Cultural Revolution:

What we can be certain of as we reassess the Cultural Revolution

20 years later is that the psycho-cultural dynamics of Chinese politics, then as now, rest tenuously upon layers of latent and contradictory sentiments that are far more decisive in the flow of events than public rationalizations of political economy policies.³¹

Literature in Mao's mind was a focal point of the contradictions in society. The current trend in China is to separate political ideology from the concerns of practical government. But Mao and the Chinese tradition in general regard literature as an important cultural component of the society, and do not want to relinquish party domination of the direction of writing. Mao's theory and writings interpreted today by the Chinese are not regarded by the pragmatists as rational because his stress on will (voluntarism) tended to push aside objective conditions and call for control over all aspects of people's lives.³² However, Deng and the current Party

³¹ Lucian Pye, "Reassessing the Cultural Revolution," The China Quarterly 108 (December 1986), p. 612.

³² Stuart Schram, "The Limits of Cataclysmic Change: Reflections on the Place of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in the Political

leaders, even in their pragmatic approach, realize that literature can play a powerful role in developing attitudes which can affect society, and with this in mind act much as the radicals before them had.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE AND DISSENT 1949-1976

Chinese literature from 1949-1976 was embroiled in politics. The Hundred Flowers period and the Cultural Revolution witnessed extremes in political direction: from a relative tolerance of literary discussion and dissent to a repressive period unlike any in modern history. The upheavals during Cultural Revolution and the subsequent focus of Chinese Literature upon the effects of those years overshadow all other influences on modern Chinese literature. This period is significant because it witnessed the creation of political and literary schools of thought through which political factions and conflict over policy would emerge.

Literary activity in this period revolved around two political groups and the intellectuals who were allied with these groups.¹ The division between the two groups was not precise; intellectuals and writers were often officials.

The radical political group consisted of Mao and his followers. Jiang Qing played a major part in supporting the radical critique of the liberal movement. The radical intellectuals for the most part held positions in various propaganda departments and influential university positions. They fleshed out the political arguments of Mao and later Jiang Qing; who would lead what came to be known as the Gang of Four.

¹ Merle Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), Introduction.

The moderate political group included Zhou Enlai, the Prime Minister, and Peng Zhen, the mayor of Beijing, who would provide impetus for the radical arguments behind the Cultural Revolution. As with the radicals, the moderate political group patronized a number of more liberal critics. The moderate officials and intellectuals were powerful in their critique of the communist government.

The period from 1949 to 1981 can be broken down into various subheadings which reveal the various and shifting positions of each faction. The first period began roughly with the People's Republic in 1949 and ended after the Hundred Flowers campaign in the early 1960's. The second period included the radical reaction to the liberal threat. The Cultural Revolution led by the radicals forced the dismissal and changed the direction of dissent. Jiang Qing and her "Gang of Four" were consequently blamed for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution after Mao's death and the subsequent rise of the liberal intellectuals and officials. The period from 1976-1981 witnessed the public reaction to the Cultural Revolution. The moderate political group was able to take power, and The Gang of Four was used as a scapegoat for the excesses undertaken during the Cultural Revolution.

The 1981 trial of the Gang of Four represented the end of radical power and the shifting of dissent from the radical-liberal mode. The subsequent public outcry against the actions of the Gang of Four was encouraged by the moderates to gather public support for their rule and to prevent the resurgence of radical power. The publicity given the trial concealed the less than moderate political

motives of the new leaders. The moderates in power did act to repair the damage done by the Cultural Revolution, but Deng Xiaoping acted much as Mao had done after the Hundred Flowers. A new debate erupted between those in power and critics who wished for further reform and liberalization of policy.

The discussion of literary dissent during these three periods revolved around the Chinese scholars. Their messages and methods appealed to the Chinese past as well as the socialist ideals as expounded by both the radicals and moderates. This chapter discusses moderate and radical arguments surrounding the three periods mentioned earlier.

ORIGINS OF THE PARTY SPLIT

The success of the communists in 1949 caused problems for the party theoreticians. The lengthy struggle and victory against the nationalists and the party propaganda against the Japanese in the Greater East Asian War caused unforeseen problems when the People's Republic was first declared. The communists had been relatively unified and content with planning for political victory, but they had not been prepared for the practical consequences of power. The requirements of the civil war and the struggle merely for existence precluded factional disputes. Only when the communists had power were they able to start thinking about the direction of the revolution.

Immediately after 1949, the Korean War caused the communists to retreat from any substantial reforms. The war effort

promoted a movement toward national unity and totalitarianism in all aspects of Chinese society.² Economic and technological power were united with the communist spirit of the people and any dissent arising over methods of production or social organization were harshly treated. The Maoist faction had power of the government during the war years.

The breakup of the party into the radical faction and the liberal faction had its roots in this period. Each faction had its own "model" through which to view society and its development. The model of the moderate faction was "pragmatic, down-to-earth, and based upon science and technology". The radical model was "highly idealistic, rhetorically revolutionary, and founded upon antiscientific faith in the human spirit."³

The initial land reform acts and the Korean War moderated conflicts within the party which would emerge later. The major trend influencing the intellectuals was a thought reform campaign begun in 1950 in which intellectuals, mostly university professors, were forced to make "detailed autobiographical confessions in which they exposed their former antisocial and bourgeois thoughts and pledged to change their views."⁴

As the communist party increased in strength, it had to control corruption and arguments within the party. The movement against corruption began in the Three Antis Movement which was to control the corruption, waste, and ponderous bureaucracy of the emerging

² Lucian W. Pye, China: An Introduction (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), p. 222.

³ Ibid., p. 222.

⁴ Ibid., p. 234.

party.⁵ In the field of education, purges and reforms were carried out with the idea that communist rhetoric and education would enable the communist party to create a stable and self sufficient society. The Korean War for the most part was a major factor creating stability and belief by a large majority that the actions of the communist party were beneficial for the society as a whole. There was a small minority which would emerge after the War as a more powerful factor; many in this group thought the propaganda and rectification campaigns revealed the party leaders as totalitarian autocrats.⁶

With the end of the War on July 27, 1953, the party rapidly tried to increase its process of collectivization, especially of agriculture. After 1955 the Chinese government began to sound more moderate and tolerant towards conflict and diversity on both domestic and international levels.⁷ China on the international level became more secure and was active as one of the leaders in the third world. The stabilized situation internationally was carried to the domestic front; the problems with the remaining conservatives seemed to be dying out. Mao himself proclaimed what came to be known as the Hundred Flowers: "Let one hundred schools of thought contend; let one hundred flowers bloom".⁸

⁵ Ibid., p. 235.

⁶ The success of the Korean War in promoting patriotism provided the radical forces with the power to begin movements to expand their influence upon society. The radicals, once a small part of the party, quickly began to assume a much more powerful influence upon the society. Those opposed to the demands of the radicals claimed that they were totalitarian leaders, and were subsequently attacked by the radicals.

⁷ Pye, China: An Introduction, p. 240.

⁸ Ibid., p. 243.

However, when Mao and other officials saw that many intellectuals were extremely upset with the path of the revolution, they quickly responded with an anti-rightist campaign. Public policies could be viewed from more than one perspective. The distinction between the radicals and the liberals was in a large part based upon their idea of which direction of economic and social reforms should take.

Political discussions between these two groups emerged in the conflict surrounding China's economic development. Dissenting intellectuals were for the most part associated with the party bureaucracy which was controlled by Deng Xiaoping, Liu Shaoqi, and Zhao Enlai.⁹ The radical intellectuals were usually associated with Mao's idealistic position. Whereas the liberals were concerned with "intellectual and professional autonomy...and they were "liberal" in the traditional Chinese sense in that they sought to improve the prevailing system by expressing a variety of viewpoints within a broad ideological framework", the radicals were committed to Marxist-Leninist revolutionary doctrine.¹⁰

As the radicals had the upper hand in the political debate, this liberal class was forced to justify its position. This was done for the most part by the liberal intellectuals who appealed to the Confucian past. Arguments thus surfaced stating that the historical Chinese regimes which had allowed for discussion and factions prospered while intolerant regimes perished.¹¹ Goldman argues that the

⁹ Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, p. 2.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 4.

concept of pure opinion, or qingyi, was established early in the Chinese regime but then, as in contemporary China, the political and economic powers repressed intellectual activity.¹²

However, even Mao had to act conciliatory in public due to the strong images of tradition which the intellectuals evoked. Therefore the conversations revolving around these two groups were tangential and oblique. The tradition of intellectual discussion within the communist party itself was powerful, but had only a recent history. The intellectuals within the regime worked to strengthen this tradition and open society for discussion over the method, if not the content, of the government.

The major impetus behind the coalescing of the two groups was the Great Leap Forward. The program to force China's swift development as a communist nation caused conflict as to how the revolution should be carried on. Mao and his forces believed that the revolutionary spirit of the people would be sufficient to overcome obstacles and quickly develop China as a technological power. Mao's approach was to change society and force it towards a technological path by focusing primarily on the superstructure of society, that is, concentrating on ideological reform. The liberals believed for the most part that the only way that a communist society could be built was to focus on developing what Marx called the infrastructure, the economic basis of society.¹³

¹² The Donglin group is an example of the relationship between the intellectuals and the officials; this type of relationship has continued throughout Chinese history.

¹³ Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, p. 11.

The conflict among officials and intellectuals changed the previous unanimity of the party. Mao suppressed dissent within the confines of private meetings, so those with arguments published in whichever magazines and publications supported their views. The radicals responded by criticizing the liberals in their publications. Whatever the methods and arguments used by either side, both the moderates and the radicals basically supported the socialist regime, their goals were to strengthen the communist party and develop its position. There is a major difference in age between the radicals and the moderates. The moderates for the most part were the older revolutionaries who were educated before the People's Republic was created. Many of the radicals were educated after 1949. The larger literary organizations such as the All-China Federation of Literature and Art contained members of both these groups. In order to get their ideas published, the larger, unwieldy group broke down into smaller, more personal groups tied by common interests.¹⁴

At the higher levels, political patrons defended their charges, so they were not severely dealt with, at least this early in the ideological conflict. The limits of protection would later change, to a lesser extent in the anti-rightist campaign following the failure of the Great Leap and to a much broader and more harsh extent during the Cultural Revolution. The reason why the radicals did not act earlier to dispel the arguments of the liberal intellectuals was that Mao himself did not have control of the political system. The moderates, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, held influential positions and

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

defended attacks to their own ideologists. It was not until the Cultural Revolution in 1966 that Mao along with Lin Biao and the Shanghai group (especially Jiang Qing) had sufficient control over the military and the political party to act against the intellectuals and moderate political elements. Mao himself was the motivating factor behind the specific activities of the radicals, and his vague call for revolution left the door open for the radicals to move into the political vacuum.¹⁵

Jiang Qing's radical Shanghai group stayed out of the initial stages of the Cultural Revolution and at the end of it were able to control the government, at least until the fall of Lin Biao and the reestablishment of the party bureaucrats, especially Zhao Ziyang and Deng Xiaoping.¹⁶ They were gradually forced out of political positions and increasingly dependent upon the weakening Mao. After his death in 1976 the Shanghai group fought a losing battle and was finally used by the moderates as a scapegoat for the excesses incurred during the Cultural Revolution.

Even though the period from 1949-1976 witnessed major purges and suppression, and intellectuals were persecuted and many either killed or sent to the countryside to atone for their "sins", the period was also one of great debate. The arguments and those espousing divergent points of view may have been muted during the purges and campaigns, but the basic arguments and factions proved to have weathered the storm along with many of the people calling for those changes.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

The suppression of intellectuals after the Hundred Flowers closed out the initial stage of the formation of these two groups of intellectuals as well as the solidification of their political positions within the government. Mass campaigns against the supposed excesses of the rightists were followed closely by Mao's attempt to solidify his faction's power and further the ideological education of the country as well as push for economic miracles during the Great Leap which lasted almost two years from 1958-1960.

Liberal Success and Radical Reaction

The subsequent economic failure of the Great Leap forced Mao to allow for greater discussion in the intellectual community. Mao himself stepped down as the president and was replaced by Liu Shaoqi, a patron of the liberal forces. The early 1960's following the Great Leap was a period of relative tolerance. The repressive actions of Mao after the severe criticism that the party took during the Hundred Flowers was symbolized by the essay "On The Correct Handling of Contradictions Among The People" in which the anti-rightist campaign of 1957 was initiated.¹⁷ With Mao's displacement as head of the state, the fear of the intellectuals in criticizing the failure of the Great Leap was somewhat lessened, although many were wary of similar reprisals from the government.

Mao and his associates seemed to be willing to allow further intellectual independence "as long as experts show results in their

¹⁷ Pye China: An Introduction, p. 243.

profession and contribute to the construction of socialism."¹⁸ For the most part the liberals agreed with Mao's statement as they too were staunch supporters of the communist government. The ability of professionals to work on their own material without harassment was summed up in the party's official magazine, the Red Flag:

The atmosphere becomes lively in any field so long as there are controversies, mutual exchanges of opinion, and mutual criticism. Such a lively atmosphere is extremely beneficial and very necessary for the development of science... questions of right and wrong in arts and sciences should be settled through free discussion.¹⁹

The criticisms of Mao which had taken shape during the Great Leap were now made public, but as the liberals gained in strength, the radicals were also chafing under the criticism of their "flaws" which were increasingly criticized.²⁰ For the next few years, the liberal intellectuals were for the most part unchallenged.

The criticisms of Mao and the radicals came from a group of officials and scholars based around Beijing. Deng Tuo was one of these figures; he was the secretary for culture and education in the Beijing Party Committee.²¹ During the Cultural Revolution Deng, along with other members of the Beijing group, were either purged or driven to their deaths. Three other officials and intellectuals closely associated with Deng were Peng Zhen, the mayor of Beijing, Wu Han, an historian and vice-mayor of Beijing, and finally Liu

¹⁸ Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, pp. 13-14.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 29, 62.

²¹ Tim Cheek, "Deng Tuo: Culture, Leninism and Alternative Marxism in the Chinese Communist Party," The China Quarterly 96 (December 1983): p. 470.

Shaoqi, the head of state. The story of these figures gives ample indication of the direction of the official status of intellectual freedom.

Deng was accused of attacking Mao's character in his newspaper columns. The "Evening Chats at Yanshan" and "Notes from a Three Family Village" criticized Mao's faulty actions during the Great Leap and his overemphasis upon ideology as opposed to concern with the people's welfare and development of an industrial and economic infrastructure.²² Deng was a committed Marxist, and he focused his critique upon China's historical past to understand the contemporary problems with which the communists were faced. Deng emphasized that serious problems were due to the ineffectual and "ignorant" politicians.²³ He, as many other liberal intellectuals, criticized the radicals for offering simplistic solutions and catchy quotes, rather than really addressing the problems which should be tackled with in-depth analysis.

Deng had published translations of marxist writings as well as written historical interpretations of China which supported the communists and attacked the nationalists from the years 1927-1937. He wrote under his real name, Deng Yunte, arguing for the party's triumph over the corrupt nationalists.²⁴ From 1961-1966 Deng shifted his tone from one of trying to appeal to Mao's conciliatory

²² Jean Daubier, A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (New York: Vintage Books, 1974). Refer to appendix 1 for commentary in this particular mode by Deng Tuo.

²³ Tim Cheek, "Deng Tuo: Culture, Leninism and Alternative Marxism in the Chinese Communist Party," p. 471.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 473.

nature and instead began to attack both his personal style and ability to rule and the failure of the Great Leap policies.²⁵

The particular technique which Deng and other dissenting writers used to editorialize was known as the "zawen". This term translated means "miscellaneous essays"; it included both satirical accounts of official's misdeeds along with the traditional Chinese method of arguing against present policies by writing about historical figures. For the most part, fiction and literary works as such were tools for revealing inequalities and corruption existing in the present day.²⁶ "Evening Chats at Yanshan" was one of Deng's critiques of the government in this genre.

In these essays Deng would write about a large variety of divergent topics, ranging from "penmanship to pen-names and openmindedness to the best way to study."²⁷ He also integrated a discussion of China's feudal past in order to critique the present. The object of these pieces was to criticize the party inefficiencies and to attack Mao's mistaken policies. However, as Timothy Cheek points out, Deng was concerned with the direction, support, and survival of the communist government.²⁸ What followed in the articles was a criticism of poor policy and planning, but the overall focus was to incite people to act in the best interest of the government and the

²⁵ Ibid., p. 483.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 484.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 484.

²⁸ The article points out that although intellectuals such as Deng were highly critical of the government and its policies, they were supportive of the general system and urged reform rather than the creation of an alternative form of government. Corruption and hypocrisy were the targets of Deng's vituperation, so that the society may be aware of the faults in the party and be able to deal problems in a peaceful manner.

party. Deng's concern for the specialized knowledge of the individual was tempered by political concerns, which were also important. Deng's use of a Ming scholar's verse, Gu Xiancheng, reveals his concern for political action and concern by the intellectual, whatever his field:

Sounds of wind, rain, and reading of books, let all sounds enter
the ear;
Affairs of home, state, and the whole world, in all things show
concern.²⁹

Deng's concern was that the scholar or engineer should have his own specialized knowledge serve as the foundation while political concerns were also important. Mao wanted the scholar to stay away from politics.³⁰ Deng also published the "Notes from a Three Family Village".³¹ He criticized party leaders for their inability to accomplish anything. They were shown to be more concerned with empty talk and phrases rather than substantive solutions to problems.³²

²⁹ Goldman, *China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent*, p. 31.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Tim Cheek, "Deng Tuo: Culture, Leninism and Alternative Marxism in the Chinese Communist Party," p. 484.

³² Tim Cheek, "Deng Tuo: Culture, Leninism and Alternative Marxism in the Chinese Communist Party," p. 486. Deng wrote a poem entitled "Ode to wild grass," which symbolized the discussion by party leaders which meant absolutely nothing. Although leaders used eye-catching phrases and symbols, Deng states that they are nothing but empty cliches, and time would be better spent thinking rather than talking. The poem is translated as follows:

The Venerable Heaven is our father
The Great Earth is our mother
And the Sun is our nanny;
The East Wind is our benefactor
And the West Wind is our enemy.

Deng criticized the left for condemning the rightists for the failure of the Great Leap. Deng in fact places the blame on the Leap's failure in the left's extremism. However, Deng was also a "Party loyalist" in that his critiques argued for the correct Leninist interpretation of the state. When Mao began the Cultural Revolution, Deng was one of the first to fall because of his outspoken criticism. With the attack upon Wu Han, the Beijing group was publicly denounced by the Maoist forces. Gao Ju, an alias for Jiang Qing, in particular was at the forefront of this purge. The group was attacked using the traditional argument that those who opposed Mao's policies were by definition against the Party and the government. Deng Tuo committed suicide on May 18, 1966.³³

Wu Han, one of Deng Tuo's associates, used a similar literary device to criticize contemporary political policies. He focused on Hai Rui, a Ming scholar who supported his emperor while at the same time disagreeing with particular policies. Wu Han used Hai Rui to criticize party failings and the defects of the Great Leap.³⁴ Wu's concern, as it was with Deng, was to argue that there could be criticism of policies while retaining support for the party. Wu argues that men should not be threatened by the possibility of punishment and supported those who stood up for their own beliefs without regard for their personal safety. Initially, Wu used Hai Rui to support those purged during the antirightist campaign and during the Great Leap. Later, Wu used the device applauding Mao's

³³ Ibid., p. 489.

³⁴ Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, p. 33.

previous contributions to the communist government, but criticizing his mistakes in recent years.

The particular focal point for the beginning of the Cultural Revolution was the play, "The Dismissal of Hai Rui from Office". The radicals viewed the play as an affront to their revolutionary ideals. The introduction of the play went against the current party platform which was negating "feudal values". It stated that the modern Chinese society and party could indeed learn from the past: "The position of Hai Rui in history should be confirmed because some of his qualities are worthy of emulation today."³⁵

The play itself focused upon the mismanagement of tax policies by officials and the plight of the peasants, who were being used by corrupt officials to line their own pockets at the expense of the people. Hai Rui supported the peasants against the local power structure, and when the problem was brought to the light of the emperor, he took the side of the corrupt landlords and dismissed Hai Rui as inspector general. The play was meant to support Peng Dehuai, who was purged during the Great Leap for similar actions.³⁶

When the play was first published, it received good reviews and was generally supported by the party bureaucracy. However, this was during the period of relative relaxation when the radicals retreated after the Great Leap. Wu argued that the Chinese communists should not substitute the particular conditions of Chinese society for the orthodox and unrealistic arguments of the communist leaders such as Mao, Marx, Engels, or Stalin. Wu wanted to integrate

³⁵ Ibid., p. 34.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 33-36.

the knowledge of the traditional Chinese society with support for the party to create a unique Chinese communism.

As Deng Tuo and Wu Han gained notoriety in the country and had the support of the bureaucracy under Liu Shaoqi, the general direction of intellectual discussion on the country turned from that of merely criticizing the past mistakes of the Great Leap towards arguing for further intellectual freedom and support by the party for further specialization. However, the Maoist faction was not willing to give up control of what they saw as the foundation of the communist strength. One of their basic arguments was that the communist society itself, in China, was based not upon the infrastructure but the ideological superstructure.

The liberal political forces themselves did not consider open opposition to the party. They encouraged and supported only minor and specific complaints against the party government. At the height of the liberalization of the early 1960's, critics of the system were never encouraged to break completely, although they were allowed more latitude than when compared to the recent past and what would shortly occur during Mao's call for further ideological struggle. As the mid-1960's approached, many of those criticizing the government realized that the Maoists were beginning to draw support from a broader segment of the party and they should therefore tone down their attacks or face similar consequences such as those suffered by Peng Dehuai.

The liberal period began to draw to a close when the last of Deng Tuo's "Evening Talks at Yanshan" was published.³⁷ In it he utilized the familiar method of using a situation in the past to explain the present political climate. Deng described a general of the Six Dynasties who, in order to survive a difficult situation, stated that one should retreat. A further quote of Deng's reveals this idea: "But the spring wind comes late to the gardens of the immortals...The Almighty should know when there is a drought in the world."³⁸

The political climate allowing a limited discussion of policies drew to a close, but many of the intellectuals regarded the approaching situation as a major failing of the political system. Many in the Propaganda department shared views similar to those in Beijing. This group used a different method of criticizing the government, rather than appealing to China's past for arguments, those in the Propaganda department used literature and "creative arts".³⁹ Many of the people in this groups were important figures of the May Fourth period. As these figures were important in China's republican period, formulating much of the communist critique and support for the party, they were highly respected members, and in the 1960's many held influential positions in the government propaganda department.

In the 1950's and 1960's Zhao Yang was the head of the party's cultural activities. He was also, as of 1956, a member of the Central Committee.⁴⁰ His function as the head of cultural activities was to

³⁷ Ibid., p. 37.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 38.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 39.

follow and enforce Mao's policies which were explained in his 1942 speeches, "Talks on Literature and Art".⁴¹ Mao had earlier attacked some of China's most influential twentieth century authors, such as Hu Feng, Ding Ling and Ai Qing.⁴² These figures were followers of Lu Xun and had argued against political control over literary or cultural affairs.

However, the 1960's entailed different conditions from those when Zhao Yang acted on Mao's behalf. The political situation, not to mention the cultural activities, had changed tremendously. Zhao Yang did not support Mao's cultural activities during the Great Leap period. He argued for a greater diversity and tolerance towards literature and art. Zhao, as many other intellectuals, was becoming disillusioned with Mao's rigid policies and appeal to ideology as opposed to realistic solutions. Although in the past Zhao had attacked those who had strayed from the party line, he now as head of the cultural sphere used similar positions as those which previously he had condemned. Unlike Mao, Zhao felt that Chinese writers should be able to learn from western figures, especially the Russian writers.⁴³

Mao argued that the literary and cultural endeavors should be understood by the peasant masses who were the object of the communist government. With this object in mind, Mao stated that the traditional intellectual approach was too elitist and bourgeois. He wanted folk tales rather than any western or other, more complex

⁴¹ See Appendix 2 for a partial summary of the Sixteen point decision.

⁴² Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, p. 39.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 41.

literary devices, to be the main tool of the party's cultural activities. Naturally those intellectuals opposing Mao were opposed to what they viewed would be a debasement of literary standards, furthermore this course of action also turned many of Mao's supporters away from his policies. Zhao argued that artists and writers should be allowed further freedom to be creative and not dogmatic. He felt that all literary creations did not have to be serious and devoted solely to prescribed ideals.⁴⁴

He took further steps and outlined his ideas which were viewed to be in direct contradiction with Mao's appeal to the common man. Zhao thought that literature "should appeal not just to workers and peasants but to all classes, with the exception of the reactionaries."⁴⁵ He also argued that criticism should be allowed and authors "may write as they please, including views contrary to the party's general and specific policies."⁴⁶ The idea of criticism was acceptable to Mao and the radicals, but the effect it had of undermining their authority led directly to the Cultural Revolution. The use of history to promote opposing views and educate people in open discussion and criticism lowered Mao's influence.

The intellectuals often appealed to the very people who were the target of Mao's policies. The failures of the Great Leap and the economic policies based on ideology rather than potential accomplishments harmed the peasants, and many of the intellectuals criticized Mao on these grounds. The threat to the radicals was that

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 46.

their idealism in the Great Leap period harmed rather than helped the masses. When these criticisms were allowed in the early 1960's, the liberal pragmatic solution was much more popular than the appeal to ideals. Zhao now argued that the complexities of the current economic crisis demanded that the party and all people, especially the intellectuals, debate and question current policies to try to improve rather than blindly adhere to one unrealistic solution. The writer should try to reveal the complexities of life. Zhao appealed to the writers: "We must not shirk the difficulties...of contradictions and struggles in life...Cheap optimism can only oversimplify life."⁴⁷

Authors used short stories, poems, and novels to argue that the peasant had been abused by the Great leap policies, and the peasants as a class should not be romanticized as the radicals had done. Many authors argued that realism in depicting the present state should be preferred over trying to portray the peasant as the ideal of the socialist state. Many of the figures who had previously supported Mao and in the 1960's argued against his unrealism still felt that literature was and should be a form of propaganda under state direction. However, they felt that Mao's appeal to an ideal class confused rather than elucidated matters. Many of these writers felt that appealing to the complexity of reality rather than solutions favoring simple answers would help the party and China more in the long run.⁴⁸ That the peasant was far from the ideal socialist citizen is evident from this new attempt at realism.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 42.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 47-50.

Mao announced the end of the period of relaxation after the Great Leap in a speech delivered to the party's Tenth Plenum in 1962. He called for more class struggle and thus an attack on those who criticized his Great Leap policies. He also maneuvered for more political power for the radicals and his own platform. These actions would severely affect the university members and other intellectuals in their recent efforts, and were met with criticism from these groups. However careful and oblique their arguments may have been, they were interpreted correctly by the Maoists as threatening their ideological agenda.

Arguments basically continued in the same vein as recent critiques of the Great Leap. Professors and writers wanted more toleration rather than less and were at the very least skeptical of Mao's call for further ideological struggle. Many intellectuals feared the disruptive climate of further ideological struggle. They argued that Mao would destroy gains in academic and economic fields merely in order to retain political control over the ideology of the party. Historians and philosophers such as Wu Han, Jian Bozan, Feng Youlan, and Liu Jie argued that emphasis should be placed on bringing society together harmoniously rather than through struggle and revolution.⁴⁹ They appealed to the tradition of Chinese philosophy rather than the Maoist mode of socialism.

The appeal for harmony and stability rather than direct opposition to Mao's policies was still more than enough to undermine his power. Mao feared relaxation of ideological struggle; many of

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 51.

these fears were borne out in that officials paid lip service to his call for revolution while acting moderately. In the Cultural revolution Mao attacked those who acted in this manner by criticizing them as a corrupt bureaucracy. Goldman states that after the tragedy of the Great Leap: "cultural officials as well as intellectuals desired unity rather than conflict."⁵⁰ Thus the officials themselves who were to be in charge of the increased revolutionary efforts were moderate and their inaction allowed the ideological dissent and debate to continue.

Scholars began to appeal more to China's past philosophical concern with Confucianism and traditional schools rather than only relying on modern interpretations of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, or Mao. These recent efforts tried to relate China's own distinct contribution to a universal process such as that entailed by Marx. What some scholars did was to incorporate ideas of Marx and the Confucian school to try to show that the Confucian tradition did have some universal elements and thus should not be overlooked.⁵¹

Other figures, such as Liu Jie, argued that China could not be compared with western countries and was based upon a different pattern.⁵² He stated that class struggle was not at the heart of China's problems. He thought that Confucian ideology should not be compared with Marxism, and that Marxism as a western philosophy may not apply to China. He argued that China was not developing historically by revolution but that evolution better described China's development.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 53.

⁵² Ibid., p. 55.

After Mao's 1962 speech, not much was done by the radicals. In fact, it was not until August 1963, over a year later, that Wu han was accused of representing the interests of the ruling class rather than the masses.⁵³ Wu Han had argued that the ruling class and the masses were more compatible than the Marxist ideology would acknowledge, and this argument was a criticism of Mao's appeal for continued revolution. Others argued that both the masses and the ruling party advocated harmony, and that there was no implicit exploitation in this arrangement of social classes.

The liberals represented a broad and well educated, powerful sector of society who were opposed to what they viewed as Mao's excesses. They were basically in the early to mid 1960's allowed to indulge in political debate. As time went on, however, Mao grew increasingly critical of this group and worked to organize a radical coalition which culminated in the Cultural Revolution. The response of the radicals to the liberals gained strength in the mid and late 1960's.

The intellectuals who contributed to the radical coalition included members from the Philosophy and Social Sciences Department of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and members from the Shanghai Party Committee's Propaganda Department.⁵⁴ These figures were mainly oriented towards the Marxist interpretation of society and opposed the liberals in their efforts towards debate. They were interested in much more than merely implementing Marxist ideology. Their opposition was "generational, personal, and

⁵³ Ibid., p. 57.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

opportunistic as well as ideological."⁵⁵ Many of the radical intellectuals were situated around Shanghai. They were also well connected personally to Mao. Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, led a group of figures from Shanghai which opposed the loose cultural control which the liberals advocated.

Ba Jin, an important liberal writer, criticized those aligned in the radical camp, such as Yao Wenyuan, who he described as one of the bureaucrats who are:

people with a hoop in one hand and a stick in the other who go everywhere looking for people who have gone astray...They enjoy making simple hoops...and wish to make everyone jump through them...If there are people who do not wish to go through their hoops and if there are some who have several kinds of flowers blooming in their gardens...these people become angry, raise up their sticks and strike out.⁵⁶

The radicals professed to believe as Mao did, that man could be transformed by writers and since this was the case the party should maintain strict control over the cultural and ideological spheres.

One of the first signs of the impending Cultural Revolution was the attack and reform of the Beijing Opera by a coalition led by Jiang Qing. They advocated a return to the Great Leap period when emphasis was placed upon the peasant as the hero and concentration revolved around ideological education. These ideas formed the basis for the new left movement and the intellectual base of the Cultural Revolution. The radical base at first competed on the same level as the liberals. They used arguments which were published in much

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 63.

the same line as the liberals, towards discussion and debate, and "their arguments were not yet simplified cliches".⁵⁷

The radicals relied on the peasant as the source of the revolution. They, as much if not more than the liberals whom they opposed, interpreted China's history to suit their own needs. One example of the use of history as a political tool was the radical thesis that all the peasant uprisings were centrally organized and directed campaigns against bourgeois owners.⁵⁸ They also criticized the liberals by using references to China's past. Whereas the liberals appealed to historical figures to support figures such as Peng Dehuai, the radicals used similar arguments to criticise his betrayal of Mao's revolution. Qi Benyu, a radical historian, used the Taiping general Li Xiucheng as an example of one who has betrayed the revolution and the leader of the movement. Li had been a revolutionary, but "his participation and his position as a commander could not negate the facts about his surrender and desertion at the last minute".⁵⁹

The radical intellectuals advocated with Mao the development of revolutionary consciousness. The increasing debate between the moderates and the radicals would lead to the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, but the radicals for the time had to tone their attacks as the dominant literary discussion was led by the liberals. In fact, the Propaganda Department itself was dominated by the moderate intellectuals. Many of the radicals, as can be seen in Jiang Qing, were recruited from outside the official departments. In the Cultural

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 65.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 68.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Revolution, the bureaucracy along with what Mao accused as the entrenched special interests of the government departments such as the Propaganda Department.

Jiang Qing first gained political power on her own right in her focus on the reform of the Beijing Opera. She felt that the moderates used the opera as a tool to criticize the radical ideology and to attack Mao's policies. Her position of strength was based upon her acting from what Mao personally felt needed to be accomplished. Jiang Qing, along with Chen Boda, an old personal friend of Mao, increasingly began to have political power because of Mao's suspicion of the party and the bureaucracy. It has been suggested because of Jiang's personal interest in the Opera, and because she was not highly regarded as an actress or writer, she used Mao's influence to destroy her opponents.⁶⁰ Whatever the cause, Jiang concentrated upon what was termed reactionary art. Films and plays were accused of being tools of the reactionaries and the liberals which did not emphasize the radical values. The values Jiang supported were based upon the radical revolutionary ideology, and Jiang proclaimed herself an advisor: "I was a roving sentinel...my job was to go over some periodicals and newspapers and present to the Chairman... things...which are worthy of attention."⁶¹

The Beijing opera was the focus of change as it was an important cultural factor which had traditionally supported what the radical group thought were reactionary and bourgeois values. The radicals under Jiang's lead argued that the peasant needed to be

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 74.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 76.

portrayed in a different light, one of being a hero. Her heroes were ideological martyrs. They acted to free the enslaved peasant. Thus, unlike the more complex and confused characters which the liberals thought were more realistic, the operas and plays Jiang supported were rooted in unreserved support of the revolution.

The emphasis gradually changed from the historical, realistic type of presentation to the idealistic, revolutionary support which the radicals advocated. The liberal figures in charge of the cultural activities at first tried to ignore Jiang's reforms, but as it became apparent that she had the backing of some radical figures not to mention Mao, they began to implement some of her ideas. While they were on the surface accepting some of what Jiang advocated, they also tried to limit her influence by not giving the projects she wanted funding, or changing the place of presentation so as to give her operas, films, and plays limited publicity.⁶²

Mao began to be more active in the mid 1960s in economic matters. His concern with cultural activities was that while the contemporary economic situation was deteriorating due to capitalist revisionism, the fundamental flaw lay in the lapse of control over ideological education. Mao called for revision within the party to make the radical intellectuals the leaders of the revolution. His intentions were made clear when in a speech on December 12, 1963, he stated:

In many departments [of art] very little has been achieved so far in socialist transformation. The 'dead' still dominate... The social and economic base has changed, but the arts as part

⁶² Ibid., pp. 81-84.

of the superstructure which serve the base still remains a serious problem. Hence we should proceed with the investigation and attend to this matter in earnest. Isn't it absurd that many Communists are enthusiastic about promoting feudal and capitalistic art, but not socialist art?⁶³

Mao himself was active in the literary world. He had written poems and articles which were given high critical marks.⁶⁴ Mao did not openly criticize his enemies until the late 1960's. He wrote poems which for the most part contained extremely veiled references to those he was criticizing. It was not until he felt he had control over the intellectual and political spheres that he launched open attacks upon the liberal opponents.

He proceeded to outline the direction of the Cultural Revolution by attacking those who would choose the capitalist style of education or literature over the dogmatic and idealistic socialist mode. He also attacked the traditional intellectual foundation of education by asserting that those who did not place first in their exams were sometimes better than those who did. Mao looked to history to explain his point: "Throughout history, very few of those who came in first in the imperial examinations have achieved great fame." In the same speech he also stated that "when the intellectuals had power, things were in a bad state, the country was in disorder...It is evident that too many books is harmful."⁶⁵

Some intellectuals had an early taste of the Cultural Revolution when after these criticisms, they were sent to the countryside to

⁶³ Ibid., p. 90.

⁶⁴ Dick Wilson, The People's Emperor Mao: A Biography of Mao Tse-Tung (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1980). pp. 445-470.

⁶⁵ Goldman, China's Intellectuals Advice and Dissent, p. 92.

learn from the peasants. But for the most part these were moderate efforts at reform. The minister of culture, Zhao Yang, went along with Mao's wishes, but he diluted their intention. The moderation of Mao's policies was a widespread practice which Mao countered by shifting his search for power from the officials towards personal and unorthodox methods of gaining support.

Efforts at party rectification were mostly deflected away from those Mao intended to reach. His targets included high level cultural figures, but as he still appealed to the same organizations which these figures headed, or tried to persuade by argument rather than direct attacks, the effect was muted. Mao finally began to set up his own cultural taskforce by setting up what became known as the Group of Five.⁶⁶ Peng Zhen was the head of this group, while the other four consisted of Lu Dingyi, Kang Sheng, Yang Shankun, and Wu Lengxi. These were radical intellectuals who had been active in opposing moderate arguments. Jiang Qing was for the most part not involved in this group, although she was active in the Shanghai organization which would play a prominent part in the Revolution and its aftermath.

Mao also used the army as a source for cultural activities. Lin Biao headed the army and was in the mid 1960's quickly becoming an influential advisor to Mao. The army and the Group of Five began to take power from the traditional intellectual groups. From this point on, Mao would appeal more directly to these groups and attack the

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 94.

liberals more openly. Mao criticized those who had earlier attacked his unrealistic idealism.

He also appealed to the peasant as the hero of the revolution, who as a class had been repeatedly criticized by intellectuals after the failures of the Great Leap. The liberals argued that the peasant at best could be used to support the revolution, but that the peasant also had inherent qualities which did not lend towards socialism. Mao supported radical figures who argued that writers should ["not depict the majority but to portray the few 'heroic' peasants, thereby 'enlightening and encouraging the people."]⁶⁷

The early rectifications in 1964 were moderate for the most part and did not attack the personal character of the offending parties except that to proclaim that their message was wrong. Also, the effect of the rectification was diluted by liberal figures who supported those whom Mao and the radicals were criticizing. But the overall direction of the campaigns began to threaten the independence of the intellectuals. The call for reform and the strength of the radicals increased towards the middle of the decade. Younger, more radical but less well known writers and intellectuals perceived that Mao's message would change the direction of society as well as improve their own position.

Zhou Yang noted the end of the 1964 rectification efforts when he recognized some of the work of those trying to reform the present system. He also, however, was still able to criticize those who advocated the radical course of action. He noted that even though

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 103.

some of the liberal intellectuals may have supported revisionist arguments in their writing, the same people have remained faithful to the political system and have acted in the best interest of the party, not towards a capitalist system. The basic message the liberals had advocated was still in effect: that the intellectual could pursue his or her own line of study while at the same time remaining faithful to the communist party without reducing one's efforts to dogmatic solutions. Writers in the mid 1960's could still publish in much the same vein as immediately following the failure of the Great Leap.

However, this situation would not last long. The Cultural Revolution would focus precisely on those liberal freedoms which remained in conflict with the radical idealism focusing upon ideological struggle. The officials who had diluted the effect of the earlier reforms were soon to be the target of Mao's reforms. Whereas the earlier reforms had taken place out of the public eye, Mao, in order to gain support for his actions, shifted the campaign to the public sphere and became increasingly critical of those who would support discussion and dissent in cultural activities.

The initial impetus for the radicalization of the reform movements began with the criticism of Wu Han's play, "The Dismissal of Hai Rui".⁶⁸ Mao elevated the struggle against the liberals by stating that the play was an important factor in the impending class struggle. Peng Zhen, a radical supporter of Mao, was appointed to carry out the criticism of Wu Han.⁶⁹ But Peng did not carry out Mao's directive. As noted earlier, Peng had been appointed to the Group of

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 118.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 119.

Five, but when he refused to put down Wu Han, Mao had to appeal to other, outside forces. It was in this light that Mao's wife gained power in determining the depth of the criticism during the Revolution. When the criticism of the play was finally written and ready for publication, none of the liberal controlled publications would print it. It had to be published in a non-party organ, the Wenhui Bao, because the liberal controlled the party press.

Wu Han was accused of distorting facts and of implicitly advocating individual farming instead of communes. He was also said to have supported the return to power of the traditional feudalistic power structure (of the officials) as opposed to merely acting on the behalf of the peasants. Immediately after publication of the criticism, many spoke out on the need for further debate on the meaning of the play and how it should be interpreted, rather than simply accepting Mao's critique of the play.

As Mao's personal ties served to strengthen his public support, he turned to whomever he could for support. A major source of radical support came from the military, as Lin Biao, who was patronized by Mao, used the military press to advocate the radical message.

Deng Tuo and other liberal writers supported Wu Han. Deng argued, and in the long run as seen in light of the events of the Cultural Revolution-correctly, that the question was not of how or which way or by whom the play was to be interpreted, but that the freedom to discuss and debate was preserved. In encouraging those who would support Wu Han, Deng wrote "Have nothing to fear, whether your views have something in common with Yao Wenjuan

[the writer of the original critique of the play] or whether your views have something in common with those of Wu Han."⁷⁰

After more than three months of inconclusive debate on the subject, Peng Zhen, the leader of the Group of Five, held a meeting on the play to try to depoliticize it. The meeting came to the conclusion that although a writer should strive to achieve Marxist ideals, there was still room for interpretation.⁷¹ The fear of writers and intellectuals was that if strict ideological limits were set, and Wu Han was punished for his work, it would halt the productive flow of ideas, which in the long run would be harmful to the economy.

The army under the direction of Lin Biao, and the Shanghai forces supported by Jiang Qing, supported the radical approach, but they had to have an historical rationale from which to act. They adopted the revolutionary approach based on sharp class distinction and struggle. In this regard the radicals had to attack the foundation of the more complex and diversified liberal approach. They initiated their attack by condemning May Fourth writers who had inherited the western ideals. Mao and his associates adopted the method of denying the worth of Soviet and western writing as not adapted to the needs of the Chinese people. The radicals wanted literary devices not to use "critical realism and Western humanism...[but]...to place emphasis upon revolutionary romanticism and class struggle."⁷²

The first targets had to be the cultural officials who had recently done so much to repudiate Mao's revolutionary

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 121.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 123.

⁷² Ibid., p. 126.

condemnation of liberal authors. Without control of the literary establishment, the radical forces were viewed as a faction, or one party of the debate rather than the true voice of the party. In order to attack the liberal intellectuals, their patrons, such as Liu Shaoqi and Peng Zhen, needed to be brought down.

On March 26, 1966, Mao openly attacked Peng Zhen for his refusal to condemn Wu Han.⁷³ Mao attacked the liberal dominated Propaganda Department and followed his private condemnations with public criticisms of the liberals. Peng Zhen retreated and allowed Wu Han to be criticized while still trying to protect Deng Tuo. But the attack by the radicals was quickly extended to other writers in order to gain control over the Propaganda Department.

Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi, although later persecuted as liberal patrons, did not support Peng Zhen and his fellow writers. They were more concerned with maintaining strength in the bureaucracy. Because of their interest in maintaining the strength of the bureaucracy they chose to align themselves with Mao. Mao's power had greatly increased due to his support by both the army and the Politburo.⁷⁴ Without support from the bureaucracy, Peng was purged in May 1966 and the other members of the Beijing group were attacked. The attack on this small group represented the initial steps of the radicals to attack the entire intellectual and literary community.

The initial stress by the radicals upon writers and the form and style of education gave way to a political struggle. The radicals now

⁷³ Ibid., p. 130.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

manuevered for political power and not just control over ideological or educational techniques. Mao accused the liberals of controlling the educational system and operating a counterrevolution. To combat their recent bourgeois ideology, the radicals called for "an extremely sharp class struggle".⁷⁵ As the liberal political patrons had recently been purged or threatened into silence, the intellectual community was attacked with increasing ferocity.

Deng Tuo was killed, as were Wu Han's wife, daughter and brother.⁷⁶ Many other intellectuals and their families were also persecuted. Wall posters were used to elicit public support, especially from university students, and to defame figures which had erred according to the radicals. This campaign became increasingly vitriolic and threatened the stability of the political system. At this point other moderate political figures, specifically Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi, tried to halt the campaigns and reestablish order.

Deng and Liu were not so much interested in protecting the intellectuals as retaining party strength. The radicals, one of their aims being to establish political power, reacted to these actions by drawing a connection between the liberal intellectuals and those trying to maintain power. Mao responded by removing Liu from the second position in the Politburo to the eighth. His position was outlined in his publication of the sixteen points which called for the Cultural Revolution and attacked the party bureaucracy.⁷⁷ Scientists and technical intellectuals were specifically exempted from the

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 132.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 133.

⁷⁷ See Appendix 2 for a partial summary of the Sixteen point decision.

struggle. They had only to support the radical cause by not opposing it and continuing their work.

The Red Guards were active in attacking those whom the radicals identified as capitalist roaders. The major "capitalist roaders" purged were Deng and Liu. As these two men provided protection for intellectuals and advocated the independence of the scientific community, their association with the scientists was questioned. In this manner the scientists were also linked to the liberal counter-revolution and were included in the Cultural Revolution.

Thus, not only were remaining intellectuals persecuted, but the party bureaucracy itself came under attack. Scientists were attacked as elitists and accused of not responding to class struggle and placing their interests above those of the masses. The answer to the many problems facing China in the wake of destroying the intellectual and scientific community was formulated by the radicals who quoted Mao's thought, which would be used for the "creation of a host of miracles".⁷⁸

The agricultural and technological advances made by engineers and scientists were completely destroyed by the Cultural Revolution. The purpose of the Revolution to create a different society, it succeeded in just that, but at the same time it destroyed the foundations of the communist society which had only recently begun to expand its economy and industry.

After the purge of the Group of Five, a new organization was set up to organize cultural activities. It was titled the Cultural Revolution

⁷⁸ Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, p. 137.

Group, which was led by Mao, and the figures on the committee were personally supported by him. It was comprised of Chen Boda, who was the director, Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, and Lin Jie. Other members were radical intellectuals who had been active in opposing the liberals after the Great Leap. This group, along with the military led by Lin Biao, carried out massive purges of the bureaucracy. Their actions were severe and based in extremist ideology, which was the opposite of the actions of the recently purged bureaucrats such as Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi.

The Red Guards were recruited to carry out many of the radical directives. The activities of the radicals halted almost all intellectual and scientific publications. The goal was to create art, literature, and science which focused on the socialist ideals which could overcome material limitations. The emphasis upon class struggle and rectification or education for the purged intellectuals destroyed the basis for building the superstructure. They accused scientists and other intellectuals of trying to restore traditional society because of their elitist approach.

The most interesting aspect of the Cultural Revolution was yet to come. The radical intellectuals, who had supported Mao's call for revolution and class struggle, were now turned upon as opportunists who desired power more than the goals of the party. As Merle Goldman points out, the radicals "were more committed to their patron's vision than he [Mao] was".⁷⁹ The radicals had disturbed Mao because of their commitment to a revolution destroying the political

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 144.

system. Mao finally realized the harshness of such an approach and seemed to moderate his methods slightly.

Mao wanted to make sure that there was a strong, centralized authority. The radicals, in their activities opposing the bureaucracy and the party itself, seemed to be promoting anarchism. Jiang Qing among others had even called upon the Red Guard to attack those in the military who had "taken the capitalist road." The conflict between the students and the military threatened to destroy China's economy, and there was even a possibility of civil war. At this stage, Lin Biao and Zhao Enlai formed a coalition of the military and the remaining bureaucrats to try to stabilize the system. Mao supported the more moderate group against the radicals, recognizing the threat of anarchy. Those attacked were labeled ultraleftists, and were supposed to have also been involved in counterrevolutionary tactics.

Some of the radicals, especially Jiang Qing and other Shanghai radicals, changed sides and promoted the need for a stabilized and strong authority. These people would later form the Gang of Four. Yao Wenyan, one of the most radical intellectuals, accused the leftists of:

Using slogans that sound extremely left but are in essence extremely right, they have stirred up evil gusts of 'doubting everyone' while bombarding the proletarian headquarters, creating dissension, and exploiting confusion.⁸⁰

From November of 1967 the Cultural Revolution dissipated. Most of the liberal writers and intellectuals had been purged, many

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 151.

had been sent to the countryside. The ultraleftists as well had been purged, although many still retained influential positions. With Mao in power, the political agenda began to moderate. However, radical Red Guard groups still existed and many criticized the moderate actions of Zhou Enlai. On the whole, the Revolution ended with the destruction of artistic and literary publications. Many writers had either lost their lives or the support necessary for publication.

The Shanghai Group led by Jiang Qing seemed to be in position to take the reigns of government. However, they were basically a small number of radical intellectuals who had had a powerful voice during the Cultural Revolution and still remained active in politics. They would be opposed by the more moderate group led by Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai. The Shanghai group wanted to consolidate political power in the hands of the radicals, but the strength of their power was deceiving. While Mao was alive, radical political power was stable, and radicals still had a powerful voice in literature, drama, and the universities. But when Mao died, government and bureaucratic support collapsed, eventually destroying the remaining power of the radicals.

The years immediately following the Cultural Revolution in the early seventies witnessed the government leaders, including Mao, trying to stabilize the economy by supporting to advancement of science. With the new emphasis upon education and moderation of conflict, the wounds were slowly addressed. Intellectuals were given more room to work on their ideas, which tried to achieve a long range rather than quick explosions of economic development. The Shanghai group and a few of the remaining radical Red Guard figures still

opposed this trend, but on the whole the bureaucracy backed up the restoration of the academic environment.

The campaigns of the Shanghai group attacked these developments, and seemed to have great political power. Thus, advancement and recovery from the revolution was very slow. Near the end of Mao's life, as well as Zhou Enlai's, Deng Xiaoping was chosen as the successor to Zhou, apparently with Mao's consent.⁸¹ The struggle for succession was then set up between the Shanghai Group and the scientific, bureaucratic, moderate forces of Deng Xiaopeng.

The literature at this time repeatedly took the side of either the moderates or the Shanghai group. Publications involved the discussion of the historical nature of each group and how well or ill suited each was to carry on the activities of government after the death of Mao and Zhou. Literature or drama as such was still focused very much on the aspect of struggle between these two groups to the exclusion of other ideas which had dominated much of the debate of the early and mid 1960's, or the May Fourth period.

The moderates chose to address the issue of succession by faintly criticizing Mao and stating that those radicals who were associated with him were opportunists. The radicals also indirectly criticized Mao's anarchistic tendencies but stated that revolutionary goals must still be the object of the government. The moderates under Deng would merely be more counter- revolutionaries who would destroy the advances of the Cultural Revolution. At the time of

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 178.

Mao's death, the radicals still had a powerful voice and controlled many of the publications, but they did not have the party and bureaucratic strength that the moderates had. The struggle between the two groups continued from 1976 until 1981.

THE RISE OF DENG XIAOPING'S MODERATE FACTION

The radicals felt that they had a legitimate chance of increasing their political authority after the death of Zhou Enlai in early 1976. The actions of Deng Xiaoping seemed to give the radicals sufficient cause to engage in similar campaigns such as had been used in the Cultural Revolution. Deng on the other hand publicly denounced the effectiveness of severe revolutionary actions and stated that the excesses of revolution could not promote the development of an economy or the academic community which could create the basis for a technological society. Literature as such was still used as more of a tool for factional disputes than what had begun to be created in the early 1960's.

Deng concentrated on stabilizing the bureaucracy which would later aid in developing the scientific community. Conflict between Deng's bureaucracy and the Shanghai Group focused on the scientific community. Deng's publication of the so-called Three Documents concerning science, technology, industry, and trade reflected the recent swing within the party towards moderation.⁸² The Shanghai Group responded by publishing radical critiques of Deng's reforms.

⁸² Ibid., p. 215.

The Four Modernizations engaged the parties in a similar struggle over the development of industry. The radical group professed fear of the new bourgeois resurgence, while Deng stated that without rebuilding the economy, the party and the state were in danger of collapsing.

As late as 1975, remnants of the activities in the Cultural Revolution still occurred. Zhou Rongxin and Liu Bing supported Deng's emphasis upon science. They were concerned with changing the educational system which had been politicized during the Cultural Revolution. The Shanghai Group under Mao's direction attacked these two figures, and Zhou was persecuted to his death.⁸³ The recent modernization appeared threatened as the Shanghai Group continued the attack upon Deng and the Three Documents. These reforms were being attacked as Soviet revisionism, and Deng was accused of being a "capitalist roader".

Literature continued to be dominated by the political concerns of the period. Lu Xun was used by the moderates to explain the current attitude of the Chinese party and bureaucracy towards technological development. Lu Xun was said to be:

most familiar with both Chinese and foreign things, and his creative writings were not only different from those of foreign countries but also different from the Chinese classical style of writing. Yet his works had the Chinese flavor and spirit.⁸⁴

⁸³ Ibid., p. 222.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 226.

Literature was used or interpreted by the moderates at this time to show that economic development could occur without sacrificing the revolution or Chinese culture.

Mao's own position was somewhere in between the two competing groups, thus giving the advantage to neither group. While he criticized Deng for not consulting him at times, Deng did submit his proposal of the Three Documents to Mao for his stamp of approval, showing that Mao on the whole accepted the bureaucratic emphasis upon technological development. While Mao's wife headed the Shanghai group, he attacked them as well for alienating too many people and not getting along with the majority. Mao instructed his wife: "You have offended too many people. Be sure to unite with the majority. These instructions are of utmost importance."⁸⁵ Thus while committing himself to a radical message, Mao realized that society had been under such a strain that the economy must be developed.

After Mao's death, the battle between the two groups finally ended with the destruction of the power of the Shanghai Group. Deng and the moderates attacked the "Gang of Four" and blamed the Cultural Revolution on them. The play which had started the Revolution was now rehabilitated, and many of those purged were given back their positions. Literature also was advanced by the toleration of humanist essays, and criticism of the radical ideology was allowed.

However, Deng's rule has not led to the type of discussion which was seen in the early 1960's. The party discouraged those forms of

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 228.

literature, especially the *zawen*, which provoked discussion and open debate over public policies. This trend has continued through the 1980's. While Deng was hospitable and encouraged scientific development, he was hesitant in reinstating literary forms and education which could cause political instability.

Intellectuals who had been purged in the 1960's were being rehabilitated in the late 1970's. Some of these writers, such as Hu Feng, Ding Ling, and Ai Qing threatened party stability because of their criticisms of the party. Their actions in the 1960's were lauded as heroic in the 1970's, but Deng discouraged contemporary critiques. He focused attention on the mistakes of the radicals and encouraged people to criticize the Gang of Four.⁸⁶ These moves had the effect of stabilizing his rule while appearing to be liberal. Deng was critical of those efforts to condemn or debate any of the contemporary actions of the party or bureaucracy.

Intellectuals are being encouraged to study western, especially Russian, works and to utilize western techniques of plot and characterization.⁸⁷ The party is also encouraging a more objective reevaluation of Chinese history, without trying to interpret actions of historical figures according to contemporary ideology. Confucianism, which had been severely criticized by the Shanghai Group, was also lauded for its emphasis upon education and affirmation of social values such as stability.

⁸⁶ Thomas Hugh (ed.), Comrade Editor: Letters to the People's Daily (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1980). This book is an anthology of letters to various newspapers throughout the country which were reprinted by the national newspaper.

⁸⁷ Goldman, China's Intellectuals: Advice and Dissent, p. 236.

The Democracy Wall movement in 1978-1979 was similar to the Hundred Flowers campaign in its toleration of criticism. However, as had happened earlier, Deng only allowed limited criticism before shutting down the movement because it may have expanded to a larger political debate and caused instability. The Democracy Wall campaign was closed and its founder, Wei Jingsheng, was sentenced to fifteen years in prison. Deng also changed the Constitution and removed the freedom to hang wall posters.⁸⁸

While the direction of literary freedom was limited, liberal intellectuals were reinstated in influential positions. Zhou Yang, Jiang Qing's nemesis, was reinstated to head the All-China Federation of Literature and Art. Deng turned and coined the phrase, "seek truth from facts," but this phrase did not impose a precise limitation upon intellectual discussion. What seemed to be Deng's intention was to develop scientific pragmatism and to accept certain western literary techniques, as long as literature would "serve the people and not damage national pride."⁸⁹

The success of Deng Xiaopeng's political movement was symbolized by the condemnation and trial of the Gang of Four in November of 1980. They were accused of being ultrarightists and of causing the "deaths of 34,000 people."⁹⁰ They were convicted on forty-eight counts of antirevolutionary practices, and Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao were sentenced to death.

⁸⁸ Lucian W. Pye, China: An Introduction, p. 218.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 219.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 333.

The status of literature and toleration of dissent at the beginning of Deng's party rule were upon their affect upon the technological development of the country. Intellectuals were slowly rehabilitated and given further freedom, but the basic foundation for the development of literature had yet to be built. The 1980's would witness a change in the content, methods, and direction of literature. However, the future of fiction or criticism would remain within the same basic political framework.

CHAPTER IV

CHINESE INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT:
IDEOLOGY AND DIRECTION

This chapter organizes the discussion of political literature and public policy by discussing some general themes which need to be defined before study of literature or specific public policies can take place. This chapter also serves to focus attention upon themes identifying an environment within which writers and officials act. In any society, there are basic underlying themes and values which serve as a basis of discussion from the general to the particular. Certain terms, such as socialist realism, have to be identified before one can understand the relationship between public officials and writers.

The intelligentsia may not seem to have much of an effect upon the state because of its lack of political power, but it is extremely significant. The "men of letters" have a very important role in social change.¹ Before reform, or revolution, can be undertaken, some idea of what is to be done must be formulated. The writers, professors, and artists act to point out problems in a society and to write or propose their own opinion about change whether it be moderate or radical.

¹ Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), pp. 119-133.

The content of literature has changed in both style and substance since the death of Mao and the takeover by the moderate faction. Recent political developments revealing moderation of social and economic regulation in the post-Mao era have witnessed an upsurge in dissent by the intelligentsia. The goals and criticisms of intellectuals and officials within China reveal problems and potential solutions both internal and external to the system. In other words, solutions may be achieved with reform or be dependent upon drastic, even revolutionary change of the system. Modern discussion using fiction and literature by writers opposed to government policies has begun to emerge in the post-Mao era. In the past, dissent for the most part has not been public, but has taken place within the confines of the party.

Many accounts of purges and revolutions in China reveal that the public knowledge of the true basis of conflict is very limited.² Even in the Cultural Revolution, the factional disputes in the party and purges of intellectuals were concealed by the efforts of both the radicals and the moderate faction in their public efforts to try to get support for their respective positions. Since the consolidation of power by the moderates after the trial of the Gang of Four, the arguments and complaints raised by intellectuals have had a more discernable effect upon public policy. The role of an artist in China is politically vague, as can be seen in the numerous discussions concerning what a writer or painter may work on, or what their

² Nien Cheng, in her book Life and Death in Shanghai, reveals that official decisions and actions were kept secret from the public. Nien Cheng, Life and Death in Shanghai (New York: Penguin Books, 1988).

subject matter should be, or the mere style used to reveal their ideas.

The relationship between the political process and literature can be studied by looking at what contemporary writers say and show in their work. Certain terms which are used by Chinese officials and are frequently debated by writers will be discussed.

Public policy will have to be defined. This will be done in two ways. First, laws, official papers, and public decrees will be discussed to show official policies towards writers specifically and the general direction of society (according to the interpretation of party ideologues). However, the study of regulations is not enough in itself to reveal the dimensions of public policy. A more general discussion of extra-parliamentary trends, or movements will also help show the official stance.

Dissent plays an important role in forming policy in the Chinese system. The dependence of the author upon the state will have to be taken into account. Many writers have been coopted into the formal apparatus of the government, and those who remain outside the confines of policy have often been persecuted by the state.

Further discussion of the parameters of the literary sphere in China includes the discussion of such terms as Socialist Realism, Freedom and Democracy. These ideas in their explicit constructions (how the government identifies and defines societal values) are important to study in order to understand dissent. Policy shifts may allow for greater or lesser freedom of expression for artists. A discussion of certain terms will aid in revealing the present

relationship between the government and the intellectual community.

The current status of literature is bound up in the history and background of the political society. A discussion of Chinese literature, as with education, has to take into account the political agenda of the government as well. In this regard, Lu Xun has played an important part in the creation of communist literature. Lu Xun's work, and the subsequent interpretation of his work by the party, serves to explain the formulation of policy concerning literature. Therefore, a discussion of Lu Xun's influence upon Chinese literature will also be included in this section.

SOCIALIST REALISM

This term reveals the government's goals and plans for society. The basis and goals for the People's Republic have changed according to which faction currently has held power. The 1980's have witnessed the "changing of the guard" towards a more moderate political faction. However, Deng and his group still regard the intellectuals and literature in general to be a potential threat to the stability of party rule. Socialist Realism, as an abstract term, reveals the goals and gives some explanation of policy decisions.

Mao Zedong was concerned with what the goals of society should be. The communist party after Mao may not have agreed with the length to which Mao seemed advocate in order to achieve this concept of "realism", but Deng Xiaoping and the moderates never changed the basic goals which were to be achieved under this theory.

Socialist Realism is inherently different than other approaches to viewing society. It takes for granted that the socialist doctrines and theories are correct and that literature should work to attain this goal as society is a combination of ideas and materials.

Mao's speeches and writings reveal the basis for the development of the socialist society. The following excerpts reveal the goals of the Chinese realism:

In their social practice, men engage in various kinds of struggle and gain rich experience, both from their successes and from their failures. Countless phenomena of the objective external world are reflected in a man's brain through his five sense organs—the organs of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. At first, knowledge is perceptual. The leap to conceptual knowledge, i.e., to ideas, occurs when sufficient perceptual knowledge is accumulated. This is one process in cognition. It is the first stage in the whole process of cognition, the stage leading from objective matter to subjective consciousness, from existence to ideas. Whether or not one's consciousness or ideas (including theories, policies, plans, and measures) do correctly reflect the laws of the objective external world is not yet proved at this stage, in which it is not yet possible to ascertain whether they are correct or not. Then comes the second stage in the process of cognition, the stage leading from consciousness back to matter, from ideas back to existence, in which the knowledge gained in the first stage is applied in social practice to ascertain whether the theories, policies, plans or measures meet with the anticipated success. Generally speaking, those that succeed are correct and those that fail are incorrect, and this is especially true of man's struggle with nature. In social struggle, the forces representing the advanced class sometimes suffer

defeat not because their ideas are incorrect but because, in the balance of forces engaged in struggle, they are not as powerful for the time being as the forces of reaction; they are therefore temporarily defeated, but they are bound to triumph sooner or later. Man's knowledge makes another leap through the test of practice. This leap is more important than the previous one. For it is this leap alone that can prove the correctness or incorrectness of the first leap in cognition, i.e., of the ideas, theories, policies, plans or measures formulated in the course of reflecting the objective external world. There is no other way of testing the truth.³

Mao sets up the objective world as part of the struggle between the idealist and the realist. The socialist theory, as the correct interpretation of existence, might suffer setbacks, but it will eventually triumph. The tool for the triumph of the communists is the Marxist definition of reality:

We are Marxists, and Marxism teaches that in our approach to a problem we should start from objective facts, not from abstract definitions, and that we should derive our guiding principles, policies, and measures from an analysis of these facts.⁴

Therefore, opposing literature and writers offering other than the socialist goals, methods, or objectives are by nature opposed to the success of the communists, which is the correct path for political

³ Stuart R. Schram (ed.), Quotations From Chairman Mao Tse-Tung (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1967), pp. 117-118.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

freedom. Literature and writers in the communist society have consequently been seen as important political actors. Socialist Realism did not just happen; it had to be directed by the party. The intellectuals under this theory had to be molded into the same framework as the rest of society in order for the party to triumph. Literature stands out as a political tool of one faction or another:

In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above the classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Proletarian literature and art are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine.⁵

Deng Xiaoping and the leaders of the Party in the 1980's were committed to the success of socialism in the country. The new leaders had fought for years to gain control from the radicals but their goals did not include sacrificing the Party and changing its interpretation of reality: "Although mistakes have been made in the past, "all...have been corrected by the party itself" without outside help."⁶

Intellectuals were often the focal point of discussions surrounding the direction of the socialist society. Many modern intellectuals do not oppose the socialist rule over society, but they want the government to be more humane than it has been in the

⁵ Ibid., p. 172.

⁶ Andrew J. Nathan, Chinese Democracy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 102.

past.⁷ However, party ideologists still refer to the concept of the socialist interpretation of society which has the effect of keeping power in the current leaders and of promoting socialist realism as the goal of literature.

The communist conception of literature aims at:

... 'the objective representation of contemporary social reality.' It claims to be all-inclusive in subject matter and aims to be objective in practice. Realism is didactic, moralistic, reformist. Without realizing the difference between description and prescription it tries to reconcile the two in the concept of 'type'. In some writers, but not all, realism becomes historic: it grasps social reality as dynamic revolution.⁸

Thus the concept of Socialist Realism is a method used by the Party to ensure that the goals and practices of the government are lauded while those offering a different opinion are labeled harmful to the system. Literature under this conception was not able to develop independent of political conditions.

CRITICAL REALISM

The tradition of literature in China which critically analyzes both politics and the general social condition of man using a realistic framework was at its peak in the early twentieth century. The "realistic" literature of the Maoist period was for the most part prescribed by the party and deviations were punished. The concept

⁷ Ibid., p. 100.

⁸ Michael S. Duke, Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 3

of Socialist Realism did not allow the artists to present their own interpretation of reality; rather, the standard pattern of literature had to be followed. Critical Realism had played a part in the literature of the early twentieth century radical movement, but as the communists took over in 1949, there was no need for the faults of society to be exposed, except as directed by the party.

Communist literature has been repeatedly criticized for its lack of social criticism. Rather, the whole point of the communist literature according to radical theory was that the writer was to support the goals and ideals of the government, not to attack or show flaws in the system, or to reveal underlying conditions of reality or to present thoughts of common people. Still, there was an historical tradition of realism which did two things. First, and most important as regards the political control over literature, a realistic approach tolerated and encouraged criticism of government policies as it revealed not what the goals of society were, but what was actually occurring. Second, this approach also allowed the development of fiction and writing which was not necessarily socially relevant. Wang Meng and others "are experimenting with intricate language, symbols and organization in order to probe the individual psyche and produce more artistic literature."⁹

Not only has the post-Mao era started to allow a broader interpretation and scope of literature involving the political, social, and economic aspects of Chinese society, but literature as a self-

⁹ Merle Goldman, review of Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era, by Michael S. Duke, The China Quarterly 106 (June 1986): p. 166.

contained artistic movement has developed. Many modern writers are now concerned and are publishing work which concentrates on revealing social problems. The current direction of this movement is to expose the corruption and inadequacies of present and past governmental failures. Tang Dacheng, in a speech to the Chinese Writers association in July 1980 stated:

For a long time now it has been forbidden to write the truth, forbidden to truthfully reflect the people's lives, the people's loves and hates, forbidden for writers to base their works on their own observations and feelings on life and to express their own opinions. We could only write campaign literature or footnote literature. As a result we've been unable to produce true works. . . . This has been a tragic and shameful page in our nations literary history. We must not under any circumstances ever again write lying or vainglorious literature.¹⁰

The term "critical realism" itself signifies a particular method of looking at society. The writer using this model focuses not on the optimistic nature of man or goals of any person or society, but rather writes to expose contradictions and flaws in the social and political network. The writer engaged in this process:

analyzes the contradictions in the disintegrating old order and the emerging new order. But he does not only see them as contradictions in the outside world, he feels them to be contradictions in himself; though he tends--again following tradition--to emphasize the contradictions rather than the forces working for reconciliation.¹¹

¹⁰ Michael S. Duke, Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era, p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

Modern Chinese Communist literature traces its roots back to the May Fourth Era and has made a resurgence in the moderation of the late 1970's and early 1980's. The renewal of critical realism was used by Deng Xiaoping to criticize the Gang of Four and to win support against the radicals. The first works in this genre were characterized by party leaders as enabling the development of the Four Modernizations. Writers and other citizens responded by writing letters, fiction, and essays which criticized the radicals and supported the moderates.¹²

The literary freedom following the downfall of the Gang of Four was curtailed as the moderates became more and more secure. The Party leaders realized the new form of literature, so admirably used to criticize their opponents, could just as well be used against them. Toleration of criticism by writers was only allowed if it did not interfere with government objectives. By early 1981, critical realism had a negative influence in the eyes of officials as it was seen at times being anti-Party and anti-socialist. The general level of literary activity is based on the amount of freedom allowed by the government. Thus, the dialogue between government officials and writers is also one of the methods of creating literature. Whether "Socialist Realism" or "Critical Realism" is at the forefront at a particular time reveals much about the general political climate as well as the overall quality of writing.

PUBLIC POLICY

¹² Hugh Thomas, Comrade Editor: Letters to the People's Daily (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1980).

The Chinese government acknowledges the role of literature in its actions controlling the process of publication. The government also acts as a censor, trying to tell authors what their subject matter can be, how they can write, and the general purpose of literature which must be upheld by authors and approved by Party officials. The risk of not complying with regulations can be removal from party posts, or much worse, as witnessed in the Cultural Revolution.

Public policy concerning literature in China is a combination of formal and informal policies and movements. Specific laws may be passed which fulfill the function of providing laws which must be followed. But the general direction of literary movements by the Party has been to appeal to other sources for legitimation of their efforts to control the content of literature. The distinction is more one of recognizing the complexity of the general society, especially in communist China. Laws may be passed promoting guidelines for fiction, but the way they are interpreted by the local authorities is much more important than the law itself. During the Cultural Revolution, the radicals frequently called out for a "liberal" interpretation of the laws in order to defend the country against class enemies. The laws were on the books, but they were frequently ignored or bypassed by those appealing to Mao's call for revolution.

In China, literature is controlled for the most part by propaganda officials and party committees. Organizations such as the Chinese Writers Association, The Chinese Artists Association, and the Chinese Dramatists Association are bound by an amorphous 1982 law

which exhorts writers and artists to "love the motherland, be loyal to the people, uphold the four basic principles, [and] wholeheartedly serve the people and socialism."¹³ The law is subject to a wide range of interpretation. Party leaders often attend literary meetings and conferences to discuss the present status of literature and to say what they, meaning usually the party at large, feel the direction of future literature should be.

The function of literature and the media has been mainly to further the goals of the party. When the goals of the party are accomplished, there is no need for a set of abstract laws to be used against writers. The problem arises when the writers, who very well may be acting according to the letter of the law, discuss material which party officials feel is a threat to their rule or particular plans. In this case, public policy may expand by exercising political power to restrain or censor writers.

The press and writers perform another vital function, that of revealing the publics' mood and the dissatisfaction of both the intellectuals and of the masses. In the past when officials felt that the press or writers were misleading the public, campaigns were frequently undertaken to reveal the mistakes of the intellectuals who were betraying either the party or the public. Problems could be raised by the press, but if they dared to oppose anything which was condoned by the current interpretation of Marxism, then they were dealt with quickly.

¹³ Andrew J. Nathan, Chinese Democracy , p. 154.

The 1982 Constitution guarantees many of the rights granted under the most "advanced" western democracies. The freedoms of speech, writing, assembly, petition, and elections sound very much like documents giving power to the people. Moreover, the Chinese constitution guarantees the election process. Granted, there is only one legal party, but as there have always seemed to be strong factions, this right could still prove to be powerful. The constitution also states that the intellectuals and other cultural entities have the right to determine their own activities. On the surface, then, the Chinese constitution is very tolerant.

However, there are some exceptions to these general guarantees of freedom. The article, "Democracy and the Legal System" notes certain powers overruling these rights: "The state has the right to intervene in all civil activities which run counter to state planning and state law and decrees."¹⁴ Furthermore, the basis for the socialist society must not be overlooked, as some of the basic rights taken for granted in the western democracies are interpreted much differently due to the Marxist doctrines. The individual in the socialist society has certain obligations to the society in general which must not be ignored:

The spirit of selflessness is a reflection of the essential disposition of the proletariat. Our party. . . demands that both party members and the masses take the selfless spirit as the moral norm of their own words and deeds and make a rupture with bourgeois

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 116.

individualism. Under the nurturing of the party, the vast ranks of the party members and the masses all take selflessness as a glory and selfishness as a shame.¹⁵

Public policy, then, is much more than the written word. The Chinese communist party acts in accordance with the spirit of the law and the direction which the revolution is to take. Official decrees and policies restricting the freedoms granted by the constitution are carried out in order to educate those who have acted according to their individual wishes rather than in the best interests of the state, which is the people. These activities are explained by a comment on the 1982 constitution:

In socialist countries, as the people are the masters of the country and the government is the people's government, the subject and object of management are consistent with each other. In other words, the masses of the people are simultaneously conductors and objects of state management. This determines that in the socialist state administrative management bears the nature of a democracy.¹⁶

DISSENT

Dissent can occur within the official confines of the party as well as external to it. For the most part, dissent and expression of discontent within the party are tolerated as those engaging in it are usually within the accepted limits of discussion. Dissent outside these parameters can occur by members both within the system and also be expressed by those outside it. Usually, when the discussion transcends the accepted limits of debate, then the concept of

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 124.

"dissent" emerges. In China, especially during purges such as the anti-rightist campaign in 1957, the boundaries of discussion are narrow, and those who engage in criticizing the government are quickly censored.

Dissent is an expression of discontent with the present political system. Whatever the means of showing dissatisfaction, whether posters, fiction, essays, poetry, speeches, drama, and articles, dissent focuses on the inabilities of the official government to deal with certain problems. Dissent refers to nonconformity to the established authority; in this case, it is refusal to accept the decisions of the party without discussion. The importance of dissent is that it is significant, particularly in one party states where the party leaders usually form a close-knit group which for the most part refuses to allow outside discussion or subsumes the larger population into its own sphere. In other words, the party may state that because it speaks for the society as a whole by definition (the party is the "people's" party, for example), then any criticism of the party is taken to be criticism against the basis for the society. Criticism is defined as opposing the interests of the political leaders. In China's case it also refers to reactionary or bourgeois elements in society who act only for their own good rather than the benefit of society.

Literature which is defined as dissent often argues that government policy is unjust. Chinese authors in recent years have had more freedom to engage in dissent, but Deng Xiaoping's authority does not allow specific attacks on party policy. Dissent revolves around the limits of discussion allowed by the authorities. The ideal

actions of the communist party allow for the free flowing discussion of ideas. Mao sums up this attitude in his article, "On Contradiction":

Opposition and struggle between ideas of different kinds constantly occur within the Party; this is a reflection within the Party of contradictions between classes and between the old and the new in society. If there were no contradictions in the Party and no ideological struggles to resolve them, the Party's life would come to an end.¹⁷

The party may admit that there are discussions and conflicts which have not yet been resolved. This is in fact the justification for the existence of the party. Without discussion and dissent which must be controlled so that society will be protected, there would be no reason for the party, and presumably the true state of communism would then emerge. However, because it is admitted there is conflict in society, it does not mean that discussion and debate are tolerated.

Mao's criticism of party officials who argue with the current policy reveals some of the limits of debate:

Another point that should be mentioned in connection with inner-Party criticism is that some comrades ignore the major issues and confine their attention to minor points when they make their criticism. They do not understand that the main task of criticism is to point out political and organizational mistakes. As to personal shortcomings, unless they are related to political and organizational mistakes, there is no need to be overcritical or the comrades concerned will be at a loss as to what to do. Moreover, once such criticism develops, there is the great danger

¹⁷ Stuart R. Schram (ed.), Quotations From Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, p. 148.

that within the Party attention will be concentrated exclusively on minor faults, and everyone will become timid and overcautious and forget the Party's political tasks.¹⁸

Literary efforts defined as dissent either criticize the party or refuse to accept the basic concepts of the party. Fiction, for example, may be identified as dissent even if it does not criticize the party. It may be condemned because it does not address the issues that party feels is important. The elaborate system of party control over literature ensures that literary work will be placed into one category or another. Official proclamation of a piece as dissent usually places the article and the writer as either opposed to the system or of having made a mistake. In the modern literary world, dissent revolves mainly about Deng's liberalization policies. When his economic or social policies are questioned, writers may be punished. For the most part, China's intellectuals do not directly criticize the party rule. The discussion of dissent takes on a more oblique and less confrontational role, than, for example, in the Soviet Union.¹⁹

LITERATURE

Literature includes a broad category of written material. The *zawen*, or short satirical essay, was perfected by some of the radical writers of the May Fourth generation, Lu Xun in particular. The tradition of the *zawen* was carried out in the People's Republic by

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁹ Michael Levitas, "Writers in China: How Long is the Leash?", The New York Times Book Review (August 9, 1987): 3.

Deng Tuo, who was purged by the communist party during the initial stages of the Cultural Revolution. The *zawen* is mainly a critical essay exposing corruption and flaws of the present political system by referring to historical people or periods which with similarities are drawn. They may also focus on innocuous subjects, such as the weather, to criticize people or policies. This type of essay, short and to the point, often humorous, was important in revealing the opinion of the writer and his colleagues.

Essays, poetry, drama, and newspaper articles may also be critical of the political system. Fiction as an art form up to the 1980's has mainly been involved with political problems and goals. The distinction between literature for its own sake, and literature as a distinct form of art which should be separate from political control and censorship, has begun to emerge in the 1980's. David Duke's book, Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era, focuses on literature with a political message, but a critique of his book, written by Merle Goldman, states that even though Duke emphasized politically oriented literature, there is in the 1980's an increasing amount of work being produced which is apolitical.²⁰

The distinction between the literature itself and the intellectual community has not always been clear. The opinion and activities of the intellectuals have been regarded much the same as the words printed which argue one cause or another. To restrict the discussion of Chinese literature to the printed word would be to reduce the

²⁰ Merle Goldman, review of Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era, by Michael S. Duke, The China Quarterly. 106 (June 1986): 166-169.

understanding of the political and social climate. The movements, purges, and revolutions with which the society as a whole and writers in particular have had to deal, if viewed along with intellectuals and their work, can give one a better understanding of the cultural environment.

Modern Chinese literature has begun to develop "humanism in the Confucian and May Fourth traditions."²¹ Writers once more are able to use literature as a tool to expose social ills. Criticisms of government policy are key factors of literature which are usually focused upon. As some literature tries to transcend ideological limits and policies, other literature tries to develop artistically. The future of Chinese literature may be based more on the latter than the former.²² Creative literature is limited by the social and political strictures as well as by intellectual barriers. The tragedy of the Cultural Revolution is that the intellectual development of literature as art has suffered in the hands of those who would force literature to be a political tool.

Writers have had definite political and social motives in the frequent movements. The recent changes in policy concerning literature focused on the definition and objectives of writing. Western literary techniques and writers are once again being looked at as possible models for development. It has been mentioned that the economic developments and improvements of living conditions

²¹ Ibid., p. 166

²² Duke notes in his work that although literature focused upon now is almost entirely political in content, literature as art may in the future become more important than other types of literature. Michael S. Duke, Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era.

since the 1960's have also had a positive impact upon the development of literature. The increase in the number of printing presses, amount of paper available (although there is still a shortage of paper supplies and presses), and the increased number of periodicals has made publication of new, sometimes experimental, and even material critical of the government, easier to publish. Even the party officials, through magazines such as the Beijing Review, have accepted that literature has a lasting and influential impact on society and, furthermore, that the process is reciprocal.²³

Party official Hu Qili stated that: "Literature and art constitute an indispensable component of Chinese socialism."²⁴ The party has goals and definitions of what constitutes literature. The party focuses on literature that recognized the national goals and ideals. Writers may agree with the party, and there are some who wholeheartedly agree with this pronouncement, but many writers would define literature as something external to specific political agendas. Literature may be literature, even if it is not defined as such by the party. However, the party under Mao formulated what "correct" literature should address, this view still holds true even today to a large extent:

Some writers, however, have forgotten their social responsibilities, producing bad and even vulgar works. . .this has been resented and criticized by the masses. . . . Mao Zedong's expositions on literature

²³ Xiao Qian, "Recent Changes in Chinese Literature," Beijing Review (October 31-November 6, 1988): 24.

²⁴ Hu Qili, "Hu Qili on Literature and Art Policies," Address delivered at the Fifth National Conference of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, reprinted in Beijing Review (November 28-December 4, 1988): 18.

and art made 45 years ago still have importance. They remain the correct guidelines for today's literature and art.²⁵

FREEDOM

Freedom and individual rights in communist China have always been proclaimed by the government leaders to be the purpose of the political system. Historically, the opportunities for individuals to exercise influence in the Chinese government have been during times of crisis, when the government or forces opposing the government were looking for methods of protecting their own positions. Whereas political rights and freedoms in the United States have always been bound up in law, freedom in communist China has been a function of the party. Political participation and debate have been tolerated in varying degrees over the last forty years in China.

In China today there is no legal privacy as in the western democracies because by definition (the P. R. C. definition) it contradicts communist philosophy.²⁶ There are a variety of reasons why legal privacy contradicts communism. First, suppression of individual rights strengthens the regime. If the populace accepts that the government has a right to make decisions concerning personal manners, then it is easier to influence and control society. Second, by definition the proletariat is by nature a good class. In their loyalty to the party, the party can often use the people to police

²⁵ Chen Danchen, "Guidelines for Literature," Beijing Review (May 25-31, 1987): 4.

²⁶ Philosophy Forum, "The Right of Privacy in the People's Republic of China and in the United States of America," (Missoula, Mt., 24 January 1989).

each other to ensure that their rules are being carried out. One example of the parties' power and influence over private lives is that the party often chooses wives for party members, signifying that the parties' will is the most important factor in society, overruling personal desires. Finally, in the Chinese judicial system itself, there are no natural human rights as found in western constitutions. There are class rights, and by focusing on the class rather than the individual, the individual comes to be seen as having less importance than the class or the party rule.²⁷

Rights may be suppressed because "good revolutionaries" have nothing to hide from the government. There are frequent meetings in which people are asked to criticize themselves and others; this did not die out after the end of the Cultural Revolution, but continued the tradition of "mind surveillance". Every house has a box in which statements can be made to denounce others to the police. The constitution itself never mentions human rights, and search warrants, for example, are not required as they are in the United States.

Literature is an important factor in developing and defending human rights. On the other hand, it may be a powerful tool of the government to influence people to accept policies and actions curtailing rights. It offers the possibility of argumentation and fermentation of ideas opposing excesses of government intrusion into personal freedoms. China has had a tradition of individualism; Confucianism and Taoism offer examples of schools of thought

²⁷ Ibid.

promoting individual decision making. Another idea is that modern literature itself may prove to be an arena of promoting rights. Legal arenas and courts have usually been areas dominated by government policies and programs, while literature has been more open to suggestion of change.

The changes in the party since the death of Mao have not been a simple reaction to his radicalism. The sudden political change after the takeover by the moderates quickly led to democratic movements which the moderates now in charge soon began to feel threatened their authority. Democracy did not mean in the early 1980's a loosening of centralized authority. This was a mistake by those taking power after Mao:

It had always been a mistake, according to the People's Daily, to confuse democracy with "anarchism" and "indiscipline." Democracy meant institutional changes in the "state system"--abolition of lifetime tenure for cadres, gradual introduction of directly elected people's congresses, an increased role for workers' congresses in government owned factories, and reduction of direct interference by party committees in the technical business of offices and plants. It meant an end to "bureaucratism"--the arbitrary, inefficient, and self-serving use of power. And it meant the rehabilitation of millions arbitrarily punished in the last twenty years of Mao's rule.²⁸

The democratic movement did not mean an end to party rule or authority, or control over the general population. It was an attempt to cut out arbitrary action and to avoid the severe unsettling economic and social consequences which had occurred over the last years of Mao's rule. The intellectuals involved in the Democracy Wall

²⁸ Andrew J. Nathan, Chinese Democracy, p. 39.

movement in 1978 pleaded with Deng and other leaders to try to provide a solid base for a democracy by arguing that when Deng died he would leave the country in the hands of the radicals who could possibly make a resurgence and attack the moderates and start another radical period. Many argued that socialism could and should continue with a larger popular voice. That way, if one faction or another were in power, they could still not act without the consent of a stabilizing force, the whole of society.²⁹

The type of democracy referred to above in the quotation seems to be the prevailing opinion today. Democracy as a system is not an end in itself; rather, it is a form of government aiding the development of the Four Modernizations.³⁰ The tradition of democracy in which the populace acted as the basis for the strength of society became known as "minben", or "people-as-the-basis".³¹ It never entailed rule as seen in the western countries, but it encouraged the leaders and the populace to consider the best interests for the development of society. Thus democracy is not a system unto itself. It is a means of promoting harmony in society and support for a government which takes the best interests of the people in mind when making policy.

MARXISM-LENINISM/ MAO ZEDONG THOUGHT

²⁹ Ibid., p. 87.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 106.

³¹ Ibid., p. 127.

This term refers to the theory behind the actions of the communist party. The communist ideology has been used to justify policies and to motivate political, social, and economic behavior. Through Mao's speeches, writings, and policies, he ruled the country until his death in 1976. Yet, when the moderates consolidated their power after the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution, Mao's thought was left in an awkward position.

The Quotations From Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, better known as the "Little Red Book", placed such an emphasis upon following Mao's every word as if it were law that when he died, the reaction against his work strained the entire political system. However, as Mao had held such a prominent position for so long, he could not be ignored nor his writings dismissed. It was admitted that Mao was human and had made mistakes, especially during the Great Leap and the Cultural Revolution. Some of the blame for the consequences of the radical policies was placed upon the remaining radical movement, especially the Gang of Four.

The party leaders still recognized that Mao was a great leader and had done much to develop the people's rule in China. He was also placed with other theorists of the communist movement, Marx and Lenin. Today the ideological foundations of the party include the works of these three men. It is interesting to note, however, that in schools today, children learn party theory by studying Marx and

Lenin, whereas Mao's work and ideas are studied in classes concerning party history.³²

The basis for policy actions revolves around the theory of Marx and the contributions later made by Lenin. The strength of the theory concerning materialism and class struggle is derived from Marx, while the practical concerns of holding power were derived from Lenin's recognition of the importance of a centralized party. Mao, as did the Russian communists, had to try to mold Marxism to an agrarian society. The specific conditions of China's economic development were more likely in Marx's theory to be the starting point for capitalism rather than communism. Mao had to use Lenin's idea of the party and allow the peasant class, along with what few workers there were in the cities, to be the basis for the party. Mao also was practical in allowing for change due to unforeseen circumstances. Chinese communism, then, adopted the ideas of these people and applied them to the country.

Since the death of Mao, the radical theories of the Maoists have given way to a new sense of pragmatism. The doctrines emphasizing struggle and revolution throughout the early years of the People's Republic served to isolate China internationally as well as to alienate the intellectuals domestically. When the moderates gained power in the late 1970's, they moved to reverse these same tendencies. Their goal was to stabilize the political system and to promote not only economic and social development within the country, but to act as a more stable and influential world power. Deng Xiaoping and the

³² The information concerning curriculum in the Chinese school system was obtained by speaking with Chinese students.

other moderate leaders realized that these could only occur when the intellectual community, at least the scientific component, was supported and given the freedom to develop their research and ideas.

With these goals in mind, the stress upon ideological "correctness" was lessened. While the party leaders still retained the strength of the party apparatus and commitment to the goals stated by the Marxist doctrines, they realized that mere revolutionary zeal was no substitute for technological progress and education.

Mao focused on the concepts of Marxism-Leninism which discussed the violent aspect of social change and the threats which would rise to fight the communist party. Mao's writings were concerned with contradiction and struggle; conflict in itself was a goal of the early communist state because of the survival of the class enemies. In this line, the struggle focuses upon class struggle and the development of class attitude. The bourgeois class was to be defeated by the masses through education and physical conflict with the reactionary classes. The prime threat to the party was revisionism, which had to be wiped out, using ideological education to reform revisionist elements.

Mao's interpretation of Marxism included the idea that the human spirit could triumph over machines. This view seems opposed to the materialist doctrines of Marx, but Mao used Lenin's work and continued the idea that Marxism had to be constructed according to reality. The party was to direct the spirit of the masses in order to defeat the capitalist threat, both internally and externally. Mao took the use of the party much further than Russian politicians,

focusing on China's unique qualities and China's ability to survive and prosper by relying only on its own resources. What this meant in terms of the intellectual classes was that the specialists and the educated class were distrusted merely because of their specialized knowledge which might "tempt" the intellectual's as a class towards revisionist actions.

The strict interpretation of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought severely curtailed educational and technological development. The reaction against this thought, almost mysticism, included the pragmatic reform of the intellectual class. China's leaders realized that for a society to modernize, it had to be stable, and it had to support people who would engineer these changes. The moderate party leaders by no means disposed of the communist ideology which formed the basis and justification for their rule, but they did realize that the intellectual class as a whole, and not merely those involved in the sciences, had to be given a certain amount of leeway in order to develop the atmosphere for development. The moderates realized that:

the manpower problem is not simply a problem of quantity or quality; also at issue is the creation of an economic and political climate conducive to the effective utilization of the prevailing manpower base, whatever its size or capabilities.³³

CLASS DEFINITIONS-BOURGEOIS AND INTELLECTUAL

³³ Denis Fred Simon, "China's S & T Intellectuals in the Post-Mao Era: A Retrospective and Prospective Glimpse," Journal of Northeast Asian Studies V. IV 2 (Summer 1985): 57.

The stratification of the traditional Chinese society into classes has not given way to the destruction of the classes in the communist era. Rather, the interpretation and definitions have shifted. There are still class differences in China, but they are based on different lines than the historic Chinese society. The traditional Chinese society focused on wealth, education, lineage, and position in the family, community, or workplace. The communists, as much as they have addressed this issue and have tried to destroy the old class distinctions, have merely set up other criteria for the development of a class structure.

The communists under Mao defined the intellectual class as suspect. The best example of this suspicion can be found in the actions taken against the intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution. Mao and the radicals extolled the virtues of the peasant, rural sector of society while condemning the urban, educated sector. While many radicals may have had sincere motives in their actions, the practical outcome of these activities was to place power in the hands of an uneducated, at times whimsical, authority. The radicals promoted the working class and punished the educated class and their children. This attempt at revolutionizing society worked, but at a tremendous price.

The bourgeois class and the intellectuals, according to Mao's definition, supported each other. Thus, the only way that the communist ideals could be attained was to attack both the economic and ideological components of the reactionary class. The Cultural Revolution witnessed the displacement of these "classes", whether or

not they had actually opposed the communists or their rule.³⁴ The threat to the political success of the radicals came from the educated and professional classes in society. As the peasant masses and the uneducated, or those under the supposed reactionary elements, were in an inferior position, it was relatively easy for the radicals to enlist their support to attack the bourgeois elements. The Cultural Revolution, then, was not merely a struggle between opposing ideological entities, but between classes.

The bourgeois and intellectual elements continue under the rule of the moderates to be a "suspect" class. The party officials who took charge after the fall of the radicals emphasized that if these elements in society posed a threat to the rule of the people's party, then they would be struggled against. One example was the rule passed by Deng Xiaoping after the Democracy Wall period removing the freedom to write "large posters" from the constitution.³⁵ Deng and the party officials stated that the intellectual community should serve the interests of the people and the revolution, rather than their own self interests. Stories, articles, or criticism opposing the rule of the party were generally related to bourgeois elements.

The intellectual class has had to fight off the stigma of being a reactionary or conservative class in China. They were presumed to be the first to fall victim to revisionist tendencies, and thus had to be under the close supervision of the party. The "enemies" of the

³⁴ Numerous accounts of the Cultural Revolution reveal the arbitrary attack on individuals regardless of their activities. Nien Cheng in particular in her work Life and Death in Shanghai reveals the fate of the intellectuals and business leaders of the Chinese society.

³⁵ Lucian W. Pye, China An Introduction, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1984), p. 218.

people were defined as the bourgeois class, which could be identified (or was, at least, by the radicals) as the upper class by nature of their position in society. Because they had the most to lose in the revolution, they were condemned as a class of being counterrevolutionaries. The intellectuals (in China an intellectual is someone with more than an elementary education), because they usually had higher paying jobs and more influential positions, were attacked as a class.³⁶ The class struggle and the different roles the economic classes played were summed up by Mao:

Who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This is a question of the first importance for the revolution. The basic reason why all previous revolutionary struggles in China achieved so little was their failure to unite with real friends to attack real enemies. A revolutionary party is the guide of the masses, and no revolutionary struggle succeeds when the revolutionary party leads them astray. To ensure that we will definitely achieve success in our revolution and will not lead the masses astray, we must pay attention to uniting with our real friends in order to attack our real enemies. To distinguish real friends from real enemies, we must make a general analysis of the economic status of the various classes in Chinese society and of their respective attitudes towards the revolution.³⁷

The revolution thus became a class struggle wherein the intellectuals, who were the upper-class generally, were the target of

³⁶ Nien Cheng, Life and Death in Shanghai (New York: Penguin Books, 1988).

³⁷ Stuart R. Schram (ed.), Quotations From Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, p. 7.

the radicals. The power of the intellectuals was not to be underestimated by the true revolutionaries:

After the enemies with guns have been wiped out, there will still be enemies without guns; they are bound to struggle desperately against us, and we must never regard these enemies lightly. If we do not now raise and understand the problem in this way, we shall commit the gravest mistakes.³⁸

Intellectuals in contemporary China may be party members, officials, authors, professors, and others engaged in education, government, and research. That intellectuals have been a target of violence in recent history has reflected the unease Chinese party leaders have felt in developing their country, both economically and socially. Intellectuals are called upon to support the policies of the government and to organize the industrialization required for economic development. Writers and their work are an important part in providing the required sense of stability and optimism needed for the success of government programs.

Literature and art have been regarded as an "indispensible component of Chinese socialism."³⁹ The task of the intellectuals is to develop works which support the goals of the party and to be wary of arbitrarily adopting corrupting influences. In this light the relationship between the party and the intellectuals is clearly understood. When intellectuals act against the wishes of the party, or criticize official behavior, the government responds by declaring the offending piece part of the bourgeois struggle against the

³⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁹ Hu Qili, "Hu Qili on Literature and Art Policies," p. 18.

people's will. Hu Yaobang refers specifically to the threat posed by the bourgeois represented by the intellectuals in an article printed in the People's Daily:

Literature and art, in particular films, plays and novels, should guard against indiscriminately and excessively cultivating western techniques and devices. As regards western artistic viewpoints, they can even less be accepted uncritically. Those people who wantonly and brazenly spread bourgeois poison should as a first step be criticized; if they take no notice, they should as a second step be transferred; if they do not change after repeated remonstrations, and persist in their errors, as a third step be disciplined. To deliberately administer poison in thought, to slander our socialist system, to encourage obsequious deference to foreign things, to wallow in feudal superstition, is to call for the censure of public opinion; cases where there are real and serious social consequences should also be prosecuted under the law.⁴⁰

The modernization of China depends upon its treatment of intellectuals and the "bourgeois" class. There are intellectuals, writers, and officials on both sides of arguments concerning the direction of the revolution. As a class, the intellectuals are called upon to fulfill their social obligations for the party and the support of government policies. But some intellectuals feel that their role would be better filled if criticism and dissent were tolerated and accepted as an attempt to expose weaknesses and corruption in the party rather than as revisionism or bourgeois attempts at survival.

⁴⁰ D. E. Pollard, "The Controversy Over Modernism, 1979-84," The China Quarterly 104 (December 1985): 649.

LU XUN

Lu Xun prefaced his first collection of short stories by explaining why it was that he chose to write when there were so many other things the Chinese people needed. Lu Xun's father died due an illness which had been attempted to be cured with the traditional Chinese medical methods. He then decided against the wishes of his mother not to go to the Confucian schools, but to go to a naval academy where he would learn a foreign subject such as medicine or law.

Lu Xun initially decided to go into medical school. His hope was that he could turn native medical superstitions around and reeducate and help as many people as he could. However, he decided that

...medical science was not so important after all. The people of a weak and backward country, however strong and healthy they may be, can only serve to be made examples of, or to witness such futile spectacles; and it doesn't really matter how many of them die from illness. The most important thing was to change their spirit, and since at that time I felt that literature was the best means to this end, I determined to promote a literary movement.⁴¹

With this aim in mind, Lu Xun gradually wrote and promoted works which exposed the cruelty of the existing political structure and tried to show what conditions were really like in China in the early twentieth century. Lu Xun thought the directive of the author was to supply hope for those who needed it and to provide something for

⁴¹ Yang and Yang (eds.) Selected Stories of Lu Hsun, p. 3.

those who fought on in the face of loneliness, which was what the person who wanted to change society faced.⁴²

As a literary figure, Lu Xun is one of the giants of the twentieth century. His goals and criticisms have been debated and reinterpreted since they were first published. He is one of the premier novelists of the early radical movement, and has been claimed by the Communist Party to be the founder of modern Chinese literature. With this short introduction to his own philosophy and his background, one can begin to see his approach to contemporary political events. What is even more interesting, and useful in terms of this study, is the effect Lu Xun's life and works have upon the following generations.

After his death in the summer of 1936, his work continued to exert a vast influence upon the radicals. A new form of writing carrying on his vituperative account of political life was engaged in, as well as many accounts of Lu Xun by those who knew him. These accounts set Lu Xun up as less an historical figure than a hero of the radical movement. Initially, Lu himself was not concerned with the party or organized opposition as such, but when he repeatedly noted the repressive action of the warlords and later the nationalist government, he gradually changed his mind and supported the communist party to the extent that he criticized the party for giving up to the nationalists when the communists allied themselves with the KMT:

⁴² Ibid., pp. 5-7.

It is of course fine to tell people with one's pen or one's tongue how miserable it is to be enslaved by an alien race, but great care must be taken to avoid leading everyone to the conclusion that it would be better after all for us to be the slaves of our own people.

Once the slogan "United Front" appeared there gradually emerged number of "revolutionary writers" who had previously surrendered to the enemy and were now priding themselves on being pioneers of "unity." Such fiendish acts as taking bribes and consorting with the enemy are now apparently glorious deeds in the cause of progress.⁴³

Lu Xun became a hero in the fight against the KMT. The initial accounts of those who knew him were fairly straightforward and intended to preserve an idea of his personality rather than his political opinions. Later, however, he was dragged into the service of one cause or the other, or made the friend of one political faction or another. It has been pointed out that, in the Cultural Revolution in particular, Lu Xun was used as a weapon for one group's argument to punish people for their flaws. The fact that he was used as a symbol for various arguments adds to his importance as a literary figure. Just as Lu Xun created figures or stories to argue a point, he was later made into a literary figure himself in order to prove a point.⁴⁴

After the victory of the Communists, Lu Xun remained a literary hero for the party. Different factions would use Lu Xun's

⁴³ W. J. F. Jenner, "Lu Xun's Last Days and After," *The China Quarterly*, 94 (June 1982): 432.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 444.

work to support their own political position.⁴⁵ One example is Lu Xun's criticism of the Party during the 1920's and 30's, but this criticism was deleted when the radicals of the 1950's and 1960's presented Lu as an obedient follower and supporter of the party and Mao's proposals. Whereas the party after taking power stressed the virtues of the peasant, Lu Xun had often supported the urban, technological development of society.

Lu Xun and many other early writers and intellectuals met frequently and talked about a wide variety of subjects. As the party grew larger more emphasis was placed upon centralization and control over these people. However, many of the writers refused to talk only about material specified by the party, Lu Xun in particular refused to cooperate.⁴⁶ Thus after Lu Xun died and the party became more dominating over literary members, Lu Xun's disciples who continued his traditions were purged, while the party retained his image as a loyal member of the party. Mao in fact proclaimed in his work "On New Democracy" that Lu was:

The chief commander of China's cultural revolution, he was not only a great man of letters, but a great thinker and revolutionary....On the cultural front, he was the bravest and most correct, the firmest, the most loyal, and the most ardent national hero, a hero without parallel in our history.⁴⁷

While his character and certain examples Lu used to set were accepted, his style of writing was discouraged. The *zawen* in

⁴⁵ Merle Goldman, "The Political Use of Lu Xun," The China Quarterly, 94 (June 1982): 446.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 446.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 447.

particular was criticized, as Deng Tuo would realize in the Cultural Revolution forty years later.

Lu Xun had borrowed western techniques of writing and applauded many of the benefits of western civilization and technology. The communists under Mao stressed folk literature or the Soviet model of socialist realism. Lu Xun often criticized the backward peasant masses while Mao would hold the peasants up as an example of party ideals. The individual was not to be stressed. The cause or the community was to be the new focal point for literature. If Lu Xun represented many of the things the communists did not want, why was he adopted as the literary hero of the communists? The answer to this question lies in his connection with the radical party as well as his criticism of the imperialist societies and the weakness of the early twentieth century government. He was also used because he had been a hero and admired figure for his criticism, and it did not hurt that he could not argue, after his death, with the claims of the party which had adopted him as their spokesman.

The importance of Lu Xun for the themes to be discussed in this thesis is his use as a political and literary yardstick with which to measure the "correctness" of an author or period. He was used to criticize wayward members of the party or society who did not conform to specific literary styles or objectives, as well as a tool to start a political movement.

One example of the use of Lu Xun as a critical tool was the policy of Wang Ming who the radicals wanted to attack in the 1960's. Wang was opposed to some of the radical policies, and the Maoists

used his "faulty" connection with Lu Xun to condemn his activities as a member of the party. The specific cause of Wang's condemnation was that he had created a new literary organization under the new treaty to create the United Front. Lu Xun had opposed this move as it would allow non-leftist writers into the new organization. At the time, other radicals and communists, including Mao, accepted and approved Wang's move. In the 1960's, Wang Ming was accused of supporting the bourgeois counterrevolution. In the 1930's, however, it was Lu Xun and his compatriots who had formed the Chinese Literary Workers who were criticized by Mao and Wang for not submitting to the will of the party.

This example reveals the tool of reinterpretation to reveal something which presumably had not earlier been noted, mainly because the offending party or parties were covering up their activities by seeming to act in the best interest of the party, when in fact they were counterrevolutionaries. The radicals used examples, events, and stories from the past which fit their needs; the specific historical incident did not have to be parallel, only similar and at times even contradictory.⁴⁸

One article noted that Jiang Qing used Lu Xun in her attack upon the Shanghai film company. The officials, with whom Jiang was upset because they had not supported her own artistic endeavors, were some of the same ones who had argued against Lu Xun and tried to compromise with the United Front. The interesting point of

⁴⁸ The use of Lu Xun by the radicals was ironic in that Lu opposed many of the ideas which the radicals supported. For example, Lu thought the peasants were backward and needed to be educated and exposed to western ideas before China could develop.

these attacks is that for the most part those who were the radicals in the 1960's were the same ones who had gone along with the idea of the United Front, including Mao Tse-tung.

By 1966, as Chen Boda was carrying out the radical purges using Lu Xun as an example, most of Lu Xun's colleagues or disciples had been purged. Chen himself as a critic of Lu Xun in 1936, defended Lu's earlier intolerance of those, like Chen, with whom he did not agree.⁴⁹ Lu Xun was also held up as an example of a literary figure who acted out of love and admiration for Mao. During the 1920's and early 1930's, Mao was not an influential figure in the party, and Lu himself was not locked into interpreting events using Marxian analysis. To summarize these statements, Lu was used because he fit a need and was molded into what the radical members of the party wanted, regardless of whether or not Lu actually was that particular person.

Lu and others associated with the literary movement of the 1920s and 1930s were not only interesting in criticizing society in the hope of revolution. They were also interested in developing a form of art or entertainment which was good in and of itself. The social message was always important, but the style, method, or form of the work were also important. The Cultural Revolution in the 1960's sought to weed out western or "artistic", meaning bourgeois-oriented or elitist, influences and adopt the Russian single-minded approach and focus upon the peasant as the unique Chinese hero. Optimism and iconoclastic figures were the model rather than Lu's

⁴⁹ Goldman, "The Political Use of Lu Xun," p. 450.

realistic and critical approach. Lu also felt that other cultures, especially the western, had a great deal to offer the Chinese people culturally. As the leading cultural example, Lu was transformed from his whole persona to a one-sided figure. In general, both the radicals and their antagonists in the 1960's interpreted history through their own lenses, but the radical representation of history was far more likely to be based less upon fact than contemporary needs.

The radical use of Lu Xun began to backfire in the 1970s as the moderates began to fight back by publishing more complete accounts of his work along with explanations for his behavior, which tended, consequently, to fault the same radicals who had supported and used Lu Xun earlier. The political struggle between the Shanghai faction and the moderates revealed that literature was more than merely a cultural force, but a political weapon as well. After the fall from power of the Shanghai group, Lu Xun was used by the moderates to condemn the radicals.⁵⁰

As the moderates gained power in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the interpretive use of Lu Xun's work gave way to a more realistic account of his life and work. However, it has been noted that many of those purged who subsequently regained power had been the enemies of Lu Xun while many of those intimately involved with him were not allowed back into their positions. The "moderate" government was more concerned with maintaining power than allowing Lu's type of criticism to return. When Zhou Enlai became

⁵⁰ Jenner, "Lu Xun's Last Days and After," p. 436.

the moderate leader of the All China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, he called for the reinstitution of the pragmatic policy that "one seek truth from fact".⁵¹ However, the moderates themselves had a political agenda which tried to reappraise the May Fourth generation and condemn the recent radicals.

The new leaders criticized the very qualities the radicals extolled. They attacked the writers for being too radical and overbearing. Lu Xun was exonerated and made into a man instead of a hero, but as a man, he could be criticized for his faults according to a different set of expectations. Lu Xun's following argument was accepted:

Politics has a tendency of maintaining the status quo and therefore is moving in a direction of clash with literature and art which reflect discontent with the status quo.⁵²

The moderate political faction now in power added an explanation of who Lu Xun was "really" attacking, solely the reactionary political and economic elements.

The moderate leaders of the 1980's wanted literature to do much the same thing the radicals before them wanted of it. Both wanted literature to uphold their particular concerns rather than attacking them. The 1980's did not issue in a new era of literary leniency or freedom. The present critic of the system acting out of the same pattern as Lu Xun would find similar obstacles as in the 1960's.

⁵¹ Goldman, "The Political Use of Lu Xun," p. 457.

⁵² Ibid., p. 459.

Lu Xun had an effect upon contemporary literature as well as politics through his work. Lu Xun's fiction, as opposed to his satirical or polemic works, seems to have taken a parallel course with literature in the late 1970s and early 1980s. His realistic, humorous approach is now becoming an objective of modern writers. There are three major aspects of Lu Xun's work which are relevant in the modern literary work. The first is that Lu Xun approached his work realistically. He tried to let the reader judge life as it is, rather than presenting an illusion. Criticism is at least as important, if not more so, than the idealistic portrayal of society. Second, in China, the peasants have either been victimized or romanticized by literature. Lu Xun promoted literature which tried to reveal not just the social status or the economic problems of the peasant but what the peasant and his family was thinking. The feelings and wishes of the peasant were considered important, not from the perspective of the party, but from the individuals themselves. Third, Lu Xun's skill as a writer let him transform the mundane into a story which let the reader see the everyday life of the peasant.⁵³

The combination between the *zawen*, including other satirical forms of writing, his fiction, his life along with the interpretation and reinterpretation of his importance as a communist author make Lu Xun a prime example for modern authors. Lu's arguments supported what the party came to stand for while not shirking the responsibility of criticizing flaws. These ideas make the use of Lu Xun as a symbol and as an example dangerous for the current

⁵³ John Chinnery, "Lu Xun and Contemporary Chinese Literature," The China Quarterly, 94 (June 1982): 411-414.

government leaders. Those modern authors, such as Liu Binyan who has acted in a similar fashion, have been criticized and many have been purged from the party because of their outspoken comments on the direction of the party.

One purpose of Chinese literature has generally been to investigate society and lifestyles of the people. It is also used as a tool to fight for social justice. The scholar-official, as seen through literature, has traditionally been respected because of the potential power of the media. The potential of the scholar explains many of the actions of the communist party towards writers. The moderation of Deng Xiaoping underscores this point. Even though the period following the radical control over the system stated its moderation, the actions of the party in purging writers and trying to control the printed word reveal that the tradition of the writer as critic has remained a strong force.

The historical tradition of the individual in society does not encourage outspoken authors, but there are many examples of conscientious officials in dynastic China who provide a pool of resources for those who are vocal in their criticism. Lu Xun's ignorant peasant, Ah Q, continues to be used as a theme for modern writers to discuss the current political problems in the countryside. Problems may arise due to the idealism of party leaders or from the conservative, self-centered peasants. Whatever the specific cause of problems, the government is being criticized for its refusal to look realistically at society and the needs of its people. Ah Q has been used repeatedly over time to point out the hypocrisy of the party worker who would rather be a high ranking party member than an

average socialist worker. The use of these themes in literature to expose corruption is lauded or condemned depending on the people in power. Generally, if the person attacked opposed the government, as the Gang of Four was in its downfall, these literary efforts were encouraged. But if fiction were used to point out and criticize current policy or ridicule certain idealistic and often unrealistic goals, it was often condemned.

Lu Xun's ideas, characters, and form of writing have been used by modern authors. One such author, Su Shuyang, styles his work on Lu Xun and another Chinese great, Lao She. Su uses Lao She's form of writing while using many similar characters and ideas of Lu Xun which better fit the present day.⁵⁴ Other authors, such as Gao Xiaosheng, have used the same basic subject matter as Lu Xun, but with a different and more modern perspective. His characters have the reality of the type Lu Xun depicted, but they are also placed in modern settings such as the Cultural Revolution or the Great Leap.

Modern satire on political events owes a great deal to Lu Xun. The point of departure for the most successful, and often most under fire by the party, are those who continued the same tradition and have worked modern settings into the old critical framework which Lu Xun stressed. The common person is the focal point of much of China's literature. Their everyday activities which are dramatized not only realistically observe, but also act to criticize, the present and the past. So far, this approach has not been well accepted by the

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 419.

party or the government, but the general tendency towards moderation has allowed further experimentation.

CONCLUSION

These discussions and definitions form the basis for the understanding of contemporary literature. The status of writers and literature is partially based upon the political policies of the communist party. Democracy and individual freedom of expression are by no means guaranteed by the constitution of China. The literary community is bound up in the political debate of the direction that development should take place. Literature is the voice of an influential sector of society which has a large impact upon the government.

But this group only forms a small minority of the whole population. The discussion surrounding the wishes and interests of the general population reflects a very real debate about the direction of government policy. Literature is a tool used to support one side or another in this argument. Because there is opposition to the official government does not mean that there are reactionary elements in society waiting in the wings to take over at the first sign of weakness. In time of crisis, the government does act in this manner, and the direction of society shifts as the party responds to what it sees as a threat.

The late 1970's and 1980's have witnessed the moderation of the political purges of intellectuals. But the government is extremely wary of opposing arguments. The breakdown of writers either

supporting or opposing government policies is a symbol of the continuing debate over policy. There remains a substantial segment of the population which wants to voice its opinion to change flaws in the contemporary system. Merely because there are opposing voices expressed in writing does not mean that the government is threatened.

The long range outlook of the party has been to isolate itself and to be extremely skeptical of other solutions, even if they are proposed by writers who state that they are loyal and have done nothing to call that loyalty into question. Historically, the communist party has isolated itself in order to make sure that it held on to political power. The discussion of literature in the following chapters and its message, whether pro or con, reveals the dimensions of the political debate and symbolizes the parameters for future political, social, and economic policy.

CHAPTER V

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE:
POLICY AND DISSENT

INTRODUCTION

China's literary community has expanded its methods, content, and role since the death of Mao. The death of Mao in 1976 was the beginning of one of the most widespread and vigorous literary movements during the communist rule. Literature had always been regarded a tool of socialist development; but with the new political scenario the old limits and controls based upon socialist realism were lifted. Literature struck out in new directions, and the intellectual community represented by these new themes also called for changes in the political system.

The height of the recent literary freedom occurred in 1979.¹ The liberal voices, along with other writers wanted to protect artistic and critical freedom in literature, art, and science and technological development from unstable political decisions. However, this new sense of freedom was not long lasting. The authorities in charge of cultural activities, including Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang, cracked down on the Democracy Wall movement and attacked those who were said to have been influenced by foreign or non-socialist ideas.

¹ Perry Link (ed.), Roses and Thorns: The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 1.

That the moderate political officials had retaliated in such an authoritarian manner revealed the extent of the government's commitment to the control of society by the party, and any attempts towards other political movements were looked upon with disfavor. A new ruling consensus emerged with the excesses of the Maoist era and control of society by the radicals giving way to the Four Modernizations. Technological development was to be a major goal of the new Chinese society, and any interference was said to be in direct contradiction to the socialist ideals.

In the mid and late 1980's, a resurgence of political discussion emerged. Government actions were predictable, but for the most part the party pursued a moderate attack upon its perceived opponents. Liu Binyan and Fang Lizhi, two of China's premier intellectuals, were criticized by the party and purged. However, the purge of Liu from the party gives one a good basis for comparison between the rule of the moderate faction and the excesses of radicals during the Cultural Revolution. An author or intellectual and his or her family were, in the Cultural Revolution, if purged, severely discriminated against. Often, the offending party was put into a detention center, sent to the countryside, or physically abused. When Liu was purged from the party in January of 1987, he was allowed to remain a vice chairman of the Chinese Writer's association, and he still publishes fiction and commentary.²

Although the party is committed to socialist ideals, and frequently criticizes authors or condemns certain works, there is a

² Mitchel Levitas, "Writers in China: How Long is the Leash?" The New York Times Book Review (August 9, 1987): p. 26.

higher level of criticism which is tolerated. The party may realize that the basis of an advancing country is dependent upon the inculcation and toleration of values and ideals leading to independent thought and experimentation. Before technological and cultural development can occur, there must be a background in which ideas and practices can be allowed to experiment.

The intellectual community in the late 1970's and 1980's has developed new modes of thought about the direction and purpose of literature. There were basically four different schools of thought concerning intellectual and literary development. Each of these groups had a different conception of the role that the government should play in trying to direct cultural and literary activities.

The political collapse of the radicals in the mid 1970's did not mean that the entire radical movement was destroyed. There are still a number of politically conservative party members who are dedicated to ideological goals similar to those the Maoists had advocated in the Cultural Revolution. To place the contemporary radical group in the exact mold of the Maoists would, however, be too extreme. A better word for this sector of society would be to call them conservative members of the party dedicated to goals similar to the 1960 radicals, but without the severe social movements and purges which were formerly used. The current conservatives (or radicals), still call for the strict control over literature by the party and frequently argue and support the more conservative movements of the current leaders. One example in the first years of the post-Mao era was Hua Guofeng (who was replaced by Zhao Ziyang 'as premier and Hu Yaobang as party chairman), who rose to prominence

during the Cultural Revolution and still held his influential positions until 1980.

The number of radical intellectuals is small, as is the support they receive from conservative political patrons. However, the consequences of the Cultural Revolution and the power and influence that the radicals held for so long still play a significant role in the formulation of policy.

Moderate officials who are currently in control over the political process have stated for the most part that their main concern is for the development of a modern socialist state. They have also since the late 1970's tried to repair the damage done to society during the Cultural Revolution. Intellectuals and the educational system are the focal point for the regeneration of society; however, many of the intellectuals are wary of getting involved in their field of study without a genuine commitment limiting the power of the government from public officials. The moderate officials are concerned with keeping political power within the hands of the party, while trying to reform the abuses and damages wrought in the past and those which continue to occur. They do not tolerate dissension and controversy over their policies, although the manner of retribution has been greatly reduced in its severity.

Moderate intellectuals who support the post-Mao government hold influential positions in universities, the party, and cultural entities. While they dominate the discussion in their support of the current government, there is still within most organizations room for discussion over minor matters. The voice of the moderate political officials is partially carried to the public by the literature of their

intellectual supporters. Many intellectuals and writers are also political and party officials.

In the late 1970's and 1980's two other groups have begun to emerge which advocate a different interpretation of the scope of the government. The moderate officials, as noted previously, remain as much in charge of the political system as the radicals were before them. One school of thought rising in opposition to the party rule consists of intellectuals, writers, and members of the general population who are neither liberal or radical. This group argues for the continuation of the moderation of policy allowing further freedom of thought and expression. They basically argue that there should be a distinctly Chinese government created and that the current officials need to relax their hold over ideological matters. The only way to develop both technologically and culturally, they argue, is to remove the restraints placed upon the Chinese people. The party itself, in its monopoly of power, needs to be policed by an outside force, one weapon being literature. Liu Binyan in particular used literature to expose corruption and waste in the party, and was punished for his writing by being purged from the party. Literature in this school of thought argues for the toleration of discussion and that literature and education should focus on bettering the party as well as fulfilling the socialist goals.

There has also been concern in China from another group which has tried to separate itself from the political arena entirely, with limited success. This group is concerned that the general status of Chinese fiction and literature is low and will continue to be surpassed by other countries unless the government eases up on its policy of

forcing writers and literature to produce work which supports the image that the party wants portrayed. Socialist Realism, these writers argue, must give way to a new sense of critical realism and literary freedom in which scientists and writers are free to pursue their work in whichever direction it takes them, regardless of pre-formulated ideals.

Naturally, critical realism has run up against barriers, especially in a socialist society. The basis of the Chinese socialist literature in the past has been to get away from corrupting images and literature of the west. The party uses literature to educate the public and to show the direction in which society is to move. With this in mind, those who advocate the separation of literature and socialist policy are participating in a political discussion. At times they may seem more radical in their call for freedom to write than those writers who argue openly and criticize the government and the party directly. Social commentators may support one political agenda over another, but on the whole they argue that their work and writings should be a concern of the political leaders.

While the distinctions between these groups is at times unclear, they serve to distinguish major cultural and political trends. While literature does not represent the whole of society, it does provide clear indications of the decisions facing the government today.

MODERATE POLICY AND LITERATURE SINCE THE RISE OF DENG
XIAOPING

China today is concerned with three major national drives: security, unity, and modernization.³ Modernization in the current international climate tends to push the Chinese towards the western developed countries for aid and education. The United States, for example, is becoming involved in supplying technology and trade, and joint ventures are increasing. This development of economic ties after the relative isolation China had maintained in the Maoist era also influenced the cultural sphere.

The reformist environment promoted by Deng Xiaoping began with his rise to power in the late 1970's. His efforts at reform are symbolized by the quote "seek truth from facts," rather than from Mao's ideological "Little Red Book." The stress on pragmatic economic policies and increased productivity still leaves the question (or problem) of how much or how fast change should take place.

In order to control the economy as well as the cultural sphere, China needs to develop a legal network which can deal with the increased litigation of a modern society. The government also has to concentrate upon maintaining a stable social system. The current leaders are set upon maintaining socialist ideals, specifically control over the educational process and literature as one method of educating the masses. The party is also concerned with maintaining state owned means of production, the primacy of Marxism, and the primary position of the party.

The new communist leaders stated at the outset of their rule in 1978 that they may make mistakes, showing their relative

³ Ambassador Hummel proposed this idea at a lecture in the spring of 1988 at the University of Montana.

moderation with respect to the Maoists of the previous decade. As modernization on such a scale has never been attempted in China, there are bound to be unforeseen problems. These potential problems are admitted for technological and economic development, but admission of flaws has an effect on the larger Chinese society of creating a different environment which is portrayed in literature. As China tries to deal with specific problems, there will be those who argue with the official policy. The traditional method of conflict and argumentation occurs in discussions carried out in fiction, drama, and newspapers.

The moderate reforms carried out by Deng Xiaopeng do not give freedom to the media or writers to carry on discussion without the consent or approval of the official party. All published material has to pass the approval of a censor. The final arbiter of what gets approved is the body of officials in the Propaganda Department. The mere existence of the department reveals the importance the party attaches to the "correct" views which should be discussed and promoted by writers.

THE GENGSHEN REFORMS

Political officials realized the need for controls on the bureaucracy and the abuses carried out by the party and bureaucratic officials. However, while the official position stated that these problems had to be overcome, they did not want alternate

solutions promoted. Deng Xiaoping began reforms which came to be known as the Gengshen Reforms in 1980. He stated that there were five major problems to modernization: "bureaucratism, overcentralization of power, the patriarchal way of doing things, lifelong tenure of leading posts, and various kinds of privileges."⁴ The corruption, inefficiencies, and duplication in the bureaucracy have become one of the major targets of journalists and writers. Liu Binyan's most famous story, "Are People Monsters?" reveals the corruption in the official network. It showed political leaders formulating their own solutions for problems and their resentment of criticism from outside sources attacking what they felt was the jurisdiction of the Party.

The Gengshen Reforms specifically addressed the role of literature and the media:

In order for the media to play the role of quickly and effectively propagating the policies and decrees of the party and the government, opportunely inform the people of all important events aside from a minority of secrets concerning national defense and diplomacy, and opportunely reflect the people's criticisms of and suggestions to the party and state organs, we should permit, require, and encourage the media, the journalists, and commentators independently to assume the responsibility of reporting or publishing news, letters from the masses, and comments. I think that such broad freedoms of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of publication carried out under the

⁴ Andrew J. Nathan, Chinese Democracy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 75.

leadership of the party's line, principles, and policies, is of prime importance in democratizing the party and the state.⁵

These reforms reveal that the Party officials view the press in particular and literature in general as tools to achieve the goals of the socialist state. Writers should be responsible for promoting official policies, the party, and the society at large. Thus the moderates continued the Maoist tradition of emphasizing the Party as the leader of the masses, and as such, must never be challenged.

POLICY SHIFTS: TOLERATION AND RESTRICTION OF CRITICISM SINCE 1978

Since 1978, the year of Deng's consolidation of power, there have been both loosening and tightening of official policies concerning intellectual and literary freedom. At times, from 1978 to 1980 for example, the Party has allowed criticism not seen at least since the early sixties after the collapse of the Great Leap. There have also been official movements limiting speech and writing similar to some of the activities in the Cultural Revolution. On the whole, the early 1980's witnessed a retraction of the toleration given to writers in the Democracy Wall period. The official government responded to what they saw as a threat from the literary community. After this period, in which persecution of writers was carried out, a new climate, more liberal, emerged about 1985. Since 1985, the position of the government has been somewhat ambiguous. Writers

⁵ Ibid., p. 83.

and social commentators such as Liu Binyan, Bei Dao and Li Fangzi have published their work, much of which has been critical of the government, but they have also been attacked by the official press and officials have repeatedly accused these men of acting against the best wishes of society. Thus, while they are allowed to speak, they have not been given the official sanction of the Party.

The period since the death of Mao has been characterized as either "tight" or "loose". This refers to the Party policy and movements concerning intellectuals and their work. Cartoonists cautiously criticized the Gang of Four during the first stage after the collapse of radical power, and many citizens revealed their opinions in letters to the editors of various papers.⁶ When the moderate officials encouraged criticisms of radical excesses, serious writing and fiction began to address the issues of the Cultural Revolution. Initially, the attacks on the radicals were precisely what the moderates wanted. When the opposing faction was condemned by a large and vocal segment of society, the moderate political position was rapidly solidified. Support for the moderates increased, and the public soon began to desire more freedom in cultural affairs. The following letter to the "Renmin Ribao" reveals the support shown for the moderates and the criticism, almost offhand condemnation, of the Gang of Four. The letter also calls for the continuation of the liberalization.

⁶ Perry Link (ed.), Roses and Thorns: The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980, p. 18. Hugh Thomas (ed.), Comrade Editor: Letters to the People's Daily, (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1980).

After the smashing of the "Gang of Four," your station's programs have shown a noticeable improvement. Some programmes are very promising.

Quite a few comrades think, however, that your minds are not yet emancipated enough and that you are still too afraid of old taboos. Let's look carefully at a week's programme schedule! With the exception of one or two barely passable new films and a few "liberated films," almost every day you still give the viewers the same old stuff to chew on. Two years have gone by since the fall of the "Gang of Four" and you still haven't dared to "liberate" those familiar favourite artists Mei Lanfang, Zhou Xinfang, Ma Lianliang, and Qiu Shengrong by showing their faces on television. The Central Broadcasting Station is much more emancipated than you are. They have dared to let their listening public enjoy Mei Lanfang, Zhou Xinfang, Ma Lianliang, and Qiu Shengrong. It seems as if you still lack the courage.

After the smashing of the "Gang of Four," one can no longer regard history with half-closed eyes and underestimate the viewing public. One can no longer fear the poison of old things or foreign things. When foreign musical groups have come to visit, some of their performances have been broadcast over the radio but have not been shown on television. It seems that you people are still a little bashful. You only put in front of the viewing public those things which you consider fit! Fine works of art are the cultural heritage of mankind. Who would dare say that Shakespeare's or Balsac's works, which Mao extolled, belong to

England or France and not to humanity?

Chairman Mao's thought is extremely open about the kinds of things with which the people should have contact: it even advocates that people should have contact with, and an understanding of, poisonous weeds, so as to raise their immunity to the poison. But you always take the "safest" course. If the film company shows it, then you show it; whatever is being shown on stage can be shown on T. V. Not only that, but basically you limit your vision to the Beijing stage. It is very rare for you to give the viewing public a good look at performances from outside the capital!

I hope that the thinking of comrades at the Central Television Station continues to be emancipated a bit more so that the door behind which cultural activities were imprisoned for so long by the "Gang of Four" might be opened a little wider. Let us see more works, old and new, Chinese and foreign, the works loved by the people of the world, the common heritage of mankind. Even though some contain poison, you must have faith in the masses' consciousness. To do otherwise is to throw away food for fear of choking. I believe that the Central Television Station will be able to meet the requests of the viewing public, earnestly reform their workstyle, and make their programmes rich, varied, powerful and lively.⁷

Thus, while the emphasis was placed on the optimism of the new political period, this letter and many others called for further freedoms. Many writers in their letters, editorials, and fiction began

⁷ Hugh Thomas (ed.), Comrade Editor: Letters to the People's Daily, p. 112-14.

to focus on what they saw as the main fault of the post-Mao era, bureaucracy. When corruption was focused upon to the point of calling for change in the government, the Party cracked down.

POLICY CONCERNING SPECIFIC FORMS AND THEMES OF LITERATURE

Literature became more realistic and initially, was allowed as long as the work focused on condemning the excesses of the previous leaders. The idealism and the distortion of reality was ridiculed, and a new form of literature was created. This new literature emphasized the weaknesses in the idealism of the radicals and became known as "scar" literature in its portrayal of the abuses wrought in the Maoist period.

The term "scar" originated in a short story called "Scar", written by Lu Xinhua. In the story, a young woman was forced during the Cultural Revolution to abandon her parents because the Party had declared that they were counter-revolutionary. But merely because her parents had been falsely accused of betraying the Communist Party, the young girl was also condemned by the Party. Because of this condemnation, her engagement to be married was broken off when her lover was forced by the Party to break his relationship with her.⁸

Initially this "scar literature" concentrated on attacking the radicals, but soon it also led to many stories of a wider and more contemporary social nature. Authors, while happy to be able to

⁸ Perry Link (ed.), Roses and Thorns: The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980, p. 20.

express their criticism of the Cultural Revolution, wanted to be able to address continuing problems and to point out problems in the modern period. Officials were criticized, pockets of corruption exposed; stories even appeared calling for the placement of power in the hands of the people.⁹

When some of the inevitable consequences of modernization such as corruption, waste, or inefficiency were also placed into this new genre, the Party became worried that the goals of progress themselves as defined by officials were coming under attack. However, since the extreme persecution of the Cultural Revolution was still in the minds of writers and officials alike, the officials tolerated the most widespread commentary, not necessarily criticism, since the founding of the People's Republic.

As the 1970's drew to a close, writing about the excesses of the radicals had become redundant, and writers began looking for new material on which to focus their attention. The political leaders became increasingly worried that the popular foundation of their own rule might be undermined, and began to keep a closer eye on publication of literary works.

The title of an anthology of stories from this period bears witness to the interpretation and importance of literature given by the government. Politically acceptable works were referred to as "roses", while fiction and material which threatened the Party was referred to as "thorns". The title of the book, Roses and Thorns, reveals the scope of official interpretation of literature. If the work

⁹ Andrew J. Nathan, Chinese Democracy , pp. 87-88.

were stated to have redeeming features and upheld the goals of the regime without criticizing the basis of the Party, then the work was at least tolerated, if not lauded. On the other hand, when writers, however loyal they might be to the Party, criticized behavior which could possibly lead to widespread criticism and a perceived weakening of support for the Party, it was condemned as being anti-Marxist, anti-revolutionary, and even supporting a revival of capitalistic behavior.

Most literature after the fall of the radicals, whether supported by the regime or not, was much more realistic. At meetings writers often called for the realistic interpretation and accounting of the life of the peasant or worker as the writer saw it, not as the Party wanted it to appear, or what the ideal scenario should be. The government had spokesmen at most of these meetings, and there were frequent policy statements, some of which will be discussed later, which stressed this realism, as long as it acknowledged party ideals.

Other themes which had only begun to be approached appeared after 1976. The fascination with western technology also led many scientists and writers to look at the basis of what they saw as the cultural strength of the West. As can be seen in the above quoted letter to the editor, western literature and alternate forms of writing, whether or not they stressed the same social goals, were admired, and Chinese authors experimented with some of these methods. The analysis of society and culture from these different points of view began slowly, and only became a force in the Chinese literary movement in the mid 1980's, but the political and

technological plans of the government had exposed the Chinese to these methods since the mid-1970's. Other, more abstract forms of writing were also allowed, such as a new focus on "romantic love," and "streams of consciousness" techniques.¹⁰

These new trends were carried out by writers who, for the most part, had been criticized or reeducated by the Party in either the aftermath of the Hundred Flowers or the Cultural Revolution. Many of these writers were skeptical of the Party and its failure to achieve the economic and social goals it had stated were its objectives. The overemphasis of the Party on centralization and unanimity of thought and the almost paranoid fear of obstruction from an outside source combined to mold the opinion of this generation of writers. Skeptical themes dominated their writing, even though the writers on the whole supported socialism. But as had happened in the past, the toleration of the 1978-1980 period was short-lived.

Even at the maximum freedom allowed writers and their work, the Party wrote deliberations on the scope and proper role of literature. The Third Plenum of the Party Central Committee, in 1978, addressed the new policy of liberalization. The debate revolved around how much literary freedom was to be given these authors. The government probably thought that writers in their zeal to uncover corruption were honorable on the whole, but when they became increasingly vituperative and called for social changes, then they had begun to transgress the bounds set by the government.

¹⁰ Perry Link (ed.), Roses and Thorns: The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980, pp. 22-24.

Official policy concerning literature was symbolized by the slogan "Writers Should Consider Social Effects", which meant that the government had started to limit its toleration and called on authors to take into account the proper social context and ideals which should be upheld.¹¹ Many officials also felt that there was altogether too much emphasis placed upon western literature which would eventually corrupt the readers and the writers engaged in these themes. This argument reveals the basis for the different groups emerging in the late 1970's and 1980's.

Policy shifted back in a more conservative direction as the Party reacted to two factors. One, it feared that the writers criticizing faults under their rule could undermine their authority and either lessen the hold of the Party over the people or that the radicals might make a comeback stressing the inability of the current regime to deal with anti-socialist forces. Two, as the moderates consolidated their authority, they became less worried that when they imposed more authoritarian practices to support their rule, the people would rebell against their more mild rule. As the moderates became more secure they called for more control over the cultural activities which they themselves had promoted to weaken the radicals.

However, there remained a larger and more vocal group of writers who continued the construction of a new literature. The writers never formed a dissident movement as had other socialist societies, and this lack of unanimity partially acted as a shield,

¹¹ Ibid., p. 37.

because the government was not threatened by a monolithic block, but a multitude of separate voices. The public officials in the late 1970's allowed a certain amount of criticism and dissent within the system; thus the conflict over policy remained relatively mild at this stage.

One of the first signs of the end of the liberalization period occurred when Bai Hua's film "Unrequited Love" was criticized by the Party. When it first appeared, it gained popular and critical support, but Bai Hua's attacks on the Party proved too much for the political leaders, and a reversal of the period of liberalism began.¹²

Deng Xiaoping, at the Fourth Congress of Writers and artists in 1979, praised the actions of the post-Mao writers, but at the same time he also gave a subtle warning of the Party's response to literature which did not support socialist ideals.

The unhampered development of different styles in creative works and free discussion of thought in literary and art theories should all be encouraged. . . writers and artists should prevent and overcome the tendency of monotonous formulism and jargonism.

In mental endeavors as complicated as literature and art, it is absolutely essential for writers and artists to totally utilize their individual creative spirit. Writers and artists must have the freedom to choose their subject matter and method of presentation based upon artistic practice and exploration. No interference in this regard can be permitted.

¹² Heng Liang and Judith Sharpiro, Cold Winds, Warm Winds: Intellectual Life in China Today (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), p. 13.

... The sole criterion for deciding the correctness of all work should be whether that work is helpful or harmful to the accomplishment of the Four Modernizations

... Writers and artists should portray pioneers in the Four Modernizations drive. They should vividly depict the pioneers' revolutionary ideals and scientific approaches, their noble sentiments and creations, their great vision, and their down-to-earth attitude. Writers and artists should use the pioneers' new images to whip up enthusiasm among our masses.¹³

Even at the height of the literary freedom, the foremost leader of the Party called for literature to concentrate on its appointed task, that of supporting the government. Deng was not alone in his call for supporting ideals; writers such as Xia Yan supported the Party's goals and felt that writers and literature were obligated to defend the government. Xia was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution as were many other writers, but he retained his loyalty and faith in the Party. He felt that the excesses of the Cultural Revolution should be forgotten and that in order to get the support of the populace, literature should pull the country together and contribute to the construction of the socialist state:

I was imprisoned for eight years and forced to write nearly a thousand confessions. I need not mention the beatings and personal insults I suffered. A foreign friend suggested that I describe these experiences. As a Communist Party member and a patriot, I felt that I should not. To reveal that fascism is still strong in China could frighten the people. We must not follow in the steps of a certain writer from the Soviet Union who

¹³ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

specialized in writing about prison camps and went to Western countries to publish his works. This course of action does not benefit the Chinese people, nor does it strengthen out unity and stability.

... I believe that before setting pen to paper, a patriotic writer, a progressive writer, and especially a writer who is a member of the Communist party, will certainly consider how to so render the themes, events, and characters in which he is interested so as to make them contribute toward rousing the revolutionary spirit and raising the moral and aesthetic levels; he must be aware of the heavy burden of responsibility he bears for the motherland and the people.¹⁴

On January 16, 1980, Deng revoked the "Four Great" freedoms of speech, which consisted of the rights to "speak out freely, air views fully, put up big character posters, and hold great debates."¹⁵ Shortly after this pronouncement, the Party criticized works which put the Party in a bad light, and some writers, such as Wei Jingsheng, were sentenced to prison.¹⁶ The Party's position shifted from supporting criticism to attacking the many arguments which did not solely support modernization.

The new position of the Party entering the 1980's was summed up in what was known as the Four Basic Principles.¹⁷ Communist

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 30-32.

ideology, known as Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, was stressed. The current leaders of the Party were singled out and supported, and writers were called upon to support the people's democratic dictatorship and the socialist road. As in the Cultural Revolution, these vague formulas provided the Party with an excuse to censor much of the new literature. This new campaign continued until 1983.

However, the extent of the crackdown by the Party was never as severe as the actions of the Cultural Revolution. The fiction written recently by using different techniques, approaches, and subject matter was criticized, but for the most part punishment was not as severe, and writers were sometimes still able to publish their work. Themes concerning love and works produced merely for the sake of art were attacked, and the so-called "bourgeois liberalism" was condemned. The new tactic of the party in carrying out these policies revealed their moderation. Instead of a direct attack by the government, as had occurred in the Cultural Revolution, the party enlisted the support of authors and poets sympathetic to their cause and supported them in their denunciation of the new literature.

Although this tactic worked on the surface, the excesses of the 1960's and 1970's led the moderate officials to less severe sanctions. Writers were for the most part left in their positions and were allowed to continue their private work, even if it was not allowed to be published. On the surface, the actions of the Party were very severe, as the literature of the next two years concentrated upon precisely what the Party wished, and the so-called scar literature, along with the other new approaches, was suppressed.

As usual in most societies, economic and political problems in the early 1980's precipitated social and cultural unrest. The moderates in power were trying to reform the Party and to focus on economic development, but its approach to the older party members and the bureaucracy seemed to cause as many problems as it solved. Corruption went unchecked and industrial development faltered, causing inflation and problems in employment, especially among the increased numbers of college graduates. Discontent erupted throughout China, and the literature began to reflect the unhappiness of the people with current conditions.

Contact with western society and individual tourists increased China's awareness of the outside world. As western literature and contact with the foreigners increased, more and more Chinese wanted the type of freedom to achieve what citizens of other countries had. Many intellectuals, especially students, who had the opportunity to travel and study abroad, wished to stay in the host country. Another trend that started was the upsurge of literature criticizing the Party and the backward government, and literary dissent entered another period of widespread support.

The officials responded at first much as they had in the past. Emphasis was placed on isolating the people from outside contacts, and propaganda called on the citizens to support the country and its socialist ideals. Thus, the Five Stresses (of civilization, courtesy, sanitation, conduct, and environment) focused on creating a distinct Chinese society and pride in what was available. The Four Beauties (of mind, language, conduct, and environment) and the Three Ardent Loves (towards the motherland, socialism, and the Party) promoted a

climate in which people would control their behavior and act for the good of society, not for what the leaders saw as the emerging problem, labor and concern only for one's individual welfare.¹⁸

Needless to say, ideological solutions could not provide an answer that the people would accept without severe forms of coercion, and the Party was hesitant to act in such a forceful manner, although there were individuals who in fact argued such a position. The solution which finally had some effect was the opening up of forms of work and production in which the worker would be rewarded for his or her own work.

THE SPIRITUAL POLLUTION CAMPAIGN

Although the Party loosened economic conditions, the country began one of its most severe movements against intellectual freedom at the end of 1983. The start of the economic reforms was paralleled by an increase in alternate forms of writing. However, at the end of the year the Party began the spiritual pollution campaign. Many intellectuals were sent to work on farms or to prisons or to places of internal exile. On October 12, the Central Committee announced a plan to rectify the Party in which the most serious offenders (who had been the targets of most of the literary discussion) were to be retired or kicked out of the Party. For the most part these were members who had supported Mao's radical plans in the Cultural Revolution. Thus, while the Party tried to control writers and the

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 42.

attacks upon the government and bureaucracy, they were also responding to the criticisms and getting rid of the most serious problems within the Party.

The Party carried out campaigns to educate the masses in socialist thought and create heroes who supported the new programs. These official literary heroes had undergone periods of doubt during the Cultural Revolution, but underlying their political values was a trust of the Party and of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. These new heroes admired the art of the west and wanted to improve their individual lifestyle, but never at the expense of the society as a whole.¹⁹

Official policy allowing freedom of expression, whether it be speech or literature, has been guaranteed throughout the communist rule. In 1978, when a new constitution was drawn up, these freedoms were once again enumerated. Many intellectuals took this as a sign that the moderates would allow them to say what they wanted without fear of retribution. But as with other freedoms, this one was relative. The distinction between the word of the law and the policy carried out based on the law were two entirely different matters.

Many actions of the radicals during the Cultural Revolution were not based upon law. Many Red Guards felt they were acting according to Mao's wishes when they took matters into their own hands. Party officials were supposedly tainted, many having been

¹⁹ Heng Liang and Judith Sharpiro, Cold Winds, Warm Winds Intellectual Life in China Today . Section II of Cold Winds, Warm Winds discusses the relationship between the concepts of the leaders and the public climate for self expression.

accused as capitalists or counterrevolutionaries. In 1979, for example, the radicals in Shanghai proclaimed the "Public Announcement on the Protection of Social Discipline."²⁰ This movement was never sanctioned by law, but it had an immediate impact on those branded counterrevolutionaries. The distinction in China should be made between rule and law. China is not a legalistic society and those in power act according to their own beliefs, as long as they have backing from some power faction.

When the literary forces arguing for more democratic government and more freedom reached their height, the government passed regulations to control the movement. Writers were accused of being "dissatisfied with reality," or had a "lack of confidence in the Party." Many of the writers were also accused of "excessive individualism."²¹ The government quickly expanded these measures to control the publications and speech throughout the entire country. As writers were accused of the above faults, which basically questioned their loyalty to the Party, the government stepped in and organized meetings and publications which were to educate and control literature.

Public policy resembled the Cultural Revolution as innumerable study sessions were held and writers were forced not merely to express their agreement with the Party, but to state how they would carry out these policies. The government did not just want support from those writers who agreed with them, but also from those who had been criticized. One example was Zhang Xiaotian, who was

²⁰ Ibid., p. 56.

²¹ Ibid., p. 58.

accused of promoting humanism. Zhang was forced by the Party to state his overstepping the bounds of Marxism-Leninism, and on top of this, that he needed to pursue his socialist studies to improve his thinking.

The Party continued to control the system by assigning jobs, using work team study groups, and controlling the appeals process through which complaints were made. Intellectuals were isolated, and their work was constantly reviewed. The expense of publishing or of traveling were usually paid for by the Party. As they controlled the means to speak out, they also could control the content.

After 1983, the Party began to loosen the restrictions and began to allow more careful study of western literature. Official magazines published articles comparing western literature to Chinese literature and reflected on whether the two could be compatible. Gradually, articles took on a more liberal viewpoint, and many encouraged the development of western technique or content. After three years of official action to control almost all aspects of publication, officials began to allow more freedom. They could tolerate more in the late 1970's as their rule had solidified and they also realized that the strict control over all cultural activities alienated them from the very people from whom they needed support.

The concept of humanism, opposed to the materialist doctrines of the communists, was again supported. Many articles argued that the stories supporting class differences were too unrealistic and did not reflect the society as it was. Only when "real" individuals were

looked at could the socialist society be improved. The officials in control of the magazines allowed these articles as long as they did not contradict the basic socialist platform.

The spiritual pollution campaign in 1983 criticized any actions with which the Party did not agree. As long as the basic premises were carried out, and if the proper themes and the proper attitude were shown, then some lenience was shown. But when writers and artists went beyond these limits (e.g., if plays were put on to make money rather than to support the proper socialist ideals or if literature were published which devoted itself to other than the proper themes), they were dealt with quickly. As writers and artists for the most part belonged to work units, they could be policed and punished by the local leaders who generally received their instruction from higher ranks in the party.

Professional associations for writers and artists conducted meetings to advise on the proper subject for study, and they also controlled who would gain prestige, awards, or money for travel. In order for a writer to become well known or to travel, or even to have his work published, he must first gain the consent of those controlling the various publishing associations. One example of the focus of these associations can be seen in the following quote from the "Literature and Art Bulletin": "We cannot say we have no definite standards. . . the Four Principles are our standards. We praise literature that serves the people and serves socialism. We must uphold and develop the tradition of revolutionary literature."²²

²² Ibid., p. 88.

One interesting example of the sometimes confusing Party policy is that of allowing passports for writers to travel overseas to discuss their work and to attend meetings with international writers. Bai Hua, a screenwriter, was not allowed to travel abroad, even though the work he did was not as controversial as the work of the other writer, but because he was vocal about criticizing certain actions of the authorities. Wang Meng, however, was allowed to travel abroad, even though as a writer he had written using western literary techniques and was considered a "humanist." He was acceptable to the Party because he publicly "toed the party line."²³

Literature, of all the arts, enjoyed the most freedom for two different reasons. In the early 1980's, as the economy grew and became more prosperous, there was more money, and printing presses and new publications were set up. The sheer number of stories and magazines limited the amount of censorship. Officials were reduced to concentrating on large publications and work intended for translation for foreign audiences. Furthermore, the censors of literature were usually editors and publishers, rather than Party officials; thus the Party allowed a more liberal control over the process than in other areas of culture such as television, drama, or movies.²⁴

Writers were urged by the Party to be consistent with official policy. When the spiritual pollution campaign reached its height, writers were accused of contributing to crimes such as murder and rape because of their corrupting liberal influences. Writers often

²³ Ibid., pp. 88-89.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 90-91.

came under attack because of their influence over students and society as a whole:

On the ideological front and on the art front there are many problems, some very serious. A small number of people, including some party members, are carrying the flag of "liberating thought" to oppose Mao Zedong Thought, the socialist system, the leadership of the party, and the people's democratic dictatorship. . . . As for the so-called Marxist humanism and socialist alienation, incorrect articles and propaganda have already been a very bad influence. Especially on a portion of young students, the negative influence is very great. All of us comrades involved in propaganda work have a responsibility to use Marxist-Leninist attitudes to analyze earnestly all kinds of wrong thought and industriously wipe out spiritual pollution.²⁵

As literature could be criticized as promoting spiritual pollution, the Party had to clarify what it meant in using this term. Writers were on the whole careful about what they wrote, but as Chinese public policy was based on this and other vague "policies," the officials gradually tried to clarify their position:

There are two kinds of spiritual pollution, one, in theory, that violates Marxist principles, and propogates the value of human beings, humanism, and socialist alienation. . . [and a second] within literary and art works, and in performances propagandizing

²⁵ Ibid., p. 94.

sexual, depraved, terrifying, violent things and the kind of stinking bourgeois life style that consists of looking for fun, drinking, sleeping, and being happy.²⁶

As can be seen from this definition, the Party had more than enough latitude remaining to deal with individual cases as they came up. The Party was concerned with controlling literary accounts of failures in economic reconstruction. Writers such as Wang Meng, and poets like Ai Qing and Ding Ling, called for the renewal of socialist ideals during the spiritual pollution campaign. Whether this reversal was to ensure survival or they really agreed with the Party was of no consequence as long as the content of literature reflected the official position.

The attitude of the Party in the reeducation of intellectuals towards the socialist path was a long term goal, and as such the struggle had to take into account the whole of literary works. The spiritual campaign extended to include poetry, drama, and fiction, as well as the theorists who discussed which of the numerous political models should be attempted. Educational policies were adopted to promote the campaign, and the press also came under its rubric. Party ideologists were responsible for correcting the revisionist cultural activities. They concentrated on the early literary heroes and writers, such as Lu Xun.

Publishing corporations were concentrated upon as they controlled which books were to be published or promoted. They were controlled by the Central Propaganda Ministry, which wrote a guide each year about what should be published and which types of

²⁶ Ibid., p. 95.

works were to be published in certain quantities. As the Ministry controlled what would be published and how much was to be printed of each work, they controlled what the populace had access to. Popular books often dealt with themes the Party did not accept and were either not published or published in very small quantities so that bookstores had no access to popular books and remained sold out.²⁷

The end of the spiritual pollution campaign began in 1984. Faltering economic progress promoted an upsurge in leftism because strict policies began to threaten moderate support. Businesses, intellectuals, writers, artists, and the general population were so wary of acting and being persecuted by the Party that the modernizations were threatened. The widening of conflict from the cultural realm to the economic and political arena was supported by remaining leftists in the Party.

LOOSENING OF RESTRICTIONS: A NEW BASIS FOR POLICY

The moderate leaders were concerned that the campaign was getting out of control and that another Cultural Revolution had begun to appear. Thus, in a report issued by the Party, the "Report on the Expansion of the Movement to Eliminate Spiritual Pollution," the campaign was revealed to threaten the reforms of the moderates, and it requested that the campaign be ended. The Party began to

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 130-35.

look at excesses and persecutions carried out under the campaign and decided that the campaign had gone too far:

What is worth paying attention to now is that some have expanded the elimination of spiritual pollution into daily life, have said that wearing high heels, curling hair, wearing new-style clothing, growing flowers, and so on. . . are also spiritual pollution. This is wrong. People should not mix up spiritual pollution with changes in material and cultural life. . . So the Secretariat of the Chinese Communist Party is paying attention to these questions and has contacted the organizations concerned . . . and told that they must realistically and correctly carry out propaganda. . . . It is not a question of sweeping everything away, but a question of eliminating what must be eliminated, retaining what must be retained, and developing what must be developed.²⁸

The campaign did not end abruptly, but trailed off, as the Party was reluctant to sacrifice its emphasis on socialist ideals. Literature was still focused upon, and writers were told that they should concentrate on supporting Chinese socialism. Those that did not listen to the advice of the Party were potential targets for further actions. Thus, as political control relaxed, there was still considerable government influence and writers crossed the line at their own risk.

The mid-1980's witnessed a turnaround in official policy concerning intellectuals. Universities, research institutions, newspapers, journals, and other cultural entities were allowed to hire individuals based on their expertise and skill. When the government stressed the ability to produce as much as possible regardless of "the color of the cat", it relaxed cultural controls as well as economic

²⁸ Ibid., p. 148.

regulations. The general atmosphere relaxed and people had much more freedom of expression.²⁹

Reforms and liberalization led peasants and workers to act for their own benefit, and many of the fortunate, or hard working were rewarded for their efforts by becoming wealthy. Intellectuals for the first time in recent years were free of suspicion and were be looked upon with more respect as they had valuable qualities which they could teach to others. Literature entered a period of more realistic writing, and the press was encouraged to reveal minor flaws in society. The government still spoke about respecting and supporting socialist ideals, but as long as people were moderate in their criticisms, they were tolerated.

With the lifting of the publication limitations, many writers of non-traditional genres became more popular and well known. When their books were published, if they were well received by the community in terms of sales, more of their books were published. The Writer's Conference in December 1984 and January 1985 criticized the government for failing to understand the true role of literature. Many speeches discussed the positive aspects of descriptive and "reportage" literature which, they stated, did not supplant socialism, but supported it.³⁰

The Party sent its representative, Hu Qili, a member of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee to give a speech emphasizing the new limits of artistic freedom and arguing for an

²⁹ Nien Cheng, Life and Death in Shanghai (New York: Penguin Books, 1988).

³⁰ Perry Link (ed.), People or Monsters? Liu Binyan (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1983), Introduction.

increased role in political participation. The following are some of his ideas:

Literary creation is a spiritual labor. The results of the work have the writer's clearly individual characteristics. It is necessary to give free reign to individual creativity, powers of observation, and imagination. . . The writer must think for himself, have full freedom to choose subjects, themes, and methods of artistic expression, to have full freedom to express his own feelings, excitement, and thought. . . .

For a long time, the party has interfered too much. . . the cadres sent by the party to the literature and art associations are good comrades, but they don't understand much about literature and art, and have harmed the relationship between the party and literature and art workers.

As for the shortcomings and problems occurring in the course of literary creation, as long as no laws are broken, they should be resolved only through criticism, discussion, and debate among literary critics. The writers should not be discriminated against politically, and should not be mistreated by their organizations.³¹

This was by far the most liberal statement by a high ranking member of the Party. Hu Yaobang, for example, stressed that writers should make sure to educate the people according to socialist ideals.

³¹ Heng Liang and Judith Sharpiro, Cold Winds, Warm Winds: Intellectual Life in China Today, p. 176.

At this time Deng had forced a large number of older, more conservative members of the party to retire. He had to concede to the conservative elements that the ideology of the communists would be strictly maintained.

An excellent example of the values promoted by the moderate officials can be seen in some of the fiction of the time. As the political leaders controlled publications, they could also control which stories were published. The collection of short stories, Prize-Winning Stories From China, includes pieces which show the difference between the moderate view of the socialist system and the themes stressed by either radicals or liberals.

One story in this collection reveals the new hero of the party which the moderates hoped would be accepted. The writer, Zhang Lin, was in 1981 the chief of train attendants of passenger cars of the Qiqihar Railway. His story, "Are You a Communist Party Member?" reflects some of the qualities which make up the new socialist man.³²

The story follows the life of Liu Dashan, the Director of the Northern Railway Bureau. He had not escaped punishment during the Cultural Revolution and had spent two years in prison. However, he never lost his faith in the Communist Party. When he was just a child during the civil war, he was directed by the Brigade leader to remain behind when the troops advanced south on the K M T. Liu was told that he had to remain behind to help run the railway, which was the artery of the system. When Liu complained to the divisional commander and asked to accompany the troops, the commander

³² W. C. Chau (ed.), Prize-Winning Stories From China 1980-1981 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1985), pp. 417-457.

asked Liu a question which served as the basis of his actions throughout his life. The commander asked Liu if he was a communist party member. To be a member of the party, then, and now was the pinnacle of a person's life. This trust and obligation to the party should never be given up by corruption, dishonesty, or opportunism. When Liu withstood wrongful punishment during the Cultural Revolution, he accepted it, but after he was released and given a plush position by the moderates, he complained because he wanted to work for the creation of the state.

Liu wanted only the chance to do what he was good at, to run a train. The Party needed men like Liu, and even though he was sometimes coarse and swore too much, or drank wine from the neck of the bottle, he was an excellent party member. He was realistic in his outlook on life but was at times too hard on his subordinates and his wife. He realized his flaws and did have some sense of compassion towards them. His main obligation, though, was to the party, and in order to fulfill this obligation he had to accept the sycophancy of those in his office, but to look into matters to reveal the true nature of the situation.

The title of the story reveals that the question running through Liu's life as a moral agent had some special significance. In fact, part of the message was the feeling of contributing to the construction of the society in whatever task one was placed. For Liu, this was to make sure that the railroads, which formed the transportation for industry, always functioned as well as possible. What did it feel like to be able to be a party member and to contribute in this way? It was not to take pride in one's rank, as Liu reveals when he refers to

an ordinary worker as one who is "above him." The following passage reveals what the author feels is the importance of the party for Liu, and symbolically for the rest of the population:

Liu slowly stood up, looked tenderly at the old worker and asked
 in a low voice, "Are you a Communist Party member?"
 "Yes, I joined the Party in 1950."
 "Me too. I joined the Party in 1942."
 The two men remained silent. They felt that words were unnecessary; it was just right to be silent. The power of language was limited, but the power of sentiment was boundless. The two men looked at each other, each finding in the opposite's face the honest eyes of a Communist Party member. Suddenly Liu embraced the old worker, and, with tears in his eyes, said, "Old comrade, you are really good."³³

Zhang Lin uses this story to tell what he feels are the virtues of the Communist Party member. The old idealism of the radicals has been replaced by a realism which is tempered with concern with people and society in general. The story does not experiment with the new forms of writing that have recently sprung up, and the Party is portrayed as made of individuals, some good, some bad. The Party can take this kind of criticism in the 1980's, especially as the hero of the story fulfills the responsibilities of the Four Modernizations. The weak or corrupt links must be dealt with, but not in the manner that the radicals had used in the Cultural Revolution. This story reflects, then, the concerns of the modern period without criticizing the Party as a whole.

³³ Ibid., pp. 430-431.

CONCLUSION

Writers in 1985 and 1986 were given much more freedom to write than in the past. However, freedoms granted the liberals were curtailed, although not nearly as far, after 1986. Liu Binyan was purged from the Party, although he retained his position, and other writers were told to make sure their work coincided with policy.

Hu Qili, the Party member quoted above in 1985, reflected this change in a 1988 speech when he called on writers not to forget their responsibilities to society:

Literature and art constitute an indispensable component of Chinese socialism. . . . Chinese writers, artists and all literary and art workers who share a common destiny with China's [populace] should clearly recognize the important social responsibilities they bear during the course of socialist reconstruction. . . . The Chinese people in this historic period of reform need a strong cohesive force of will and a spiritual motive force. The glorious task of our literary and art workers is to actively throw themselves into the torrents of reform, opening up and the modernization drive. They must incorporate their personal pursuit of literature and art with the historical movement to rejuvenate the nation, and use their high-quality literary and artistic creations to boost public morale, arouse the national spirit, raise the people's quality, enlighten the people's wisdom enrich the people's souls, and satisfy the masses' diversified and multilayered needs for cultural well being. They must unite, encourage and inspire the people to fight valiantly for realizing the modernization programme, rejuvenating China and building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Writers and artists who have worked selflessly and devoted themselves to the creation of this target, and those continuing to do so, all deserve the love and esteem of the whole of society.

Our experience of the past 10 years tells us that the Party's correct leadership over literature and art should first of all manifest itself in the earnest implementation of the Party's basic line and the upholding of one central task (economic development).³⁴

Thus the official definition of the freedom of literature is based upon whether or not certain political priorities are taken care of first. Criticism and argumentation, along with the task of the press to expose corruption and waste, are tolerable according to the political climate of the time. The last couple of years have been neither conservative nor liberal, but balanced somewhere in the middle. Writers have been purged lately, and many conservatives have called for the reinstatement of some of the more radical programs, but at the same time the journalists and writers who have been publicly criticized are still free to speak and write. If the Chinese government continues to build a solid foundation of support among the peasants, working class, and intellectuals, there will be fewer extreme shifts in either direction.

³⁴ Hu Qili, "Hu Qili on Literature and Art Policies," Address delivered at the Fifth National Conference of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, reprinted in Beijing Review (November 28-December 4, 1988).

CHAPTER VI

LITERATURE CONCERNING POLICY: PRO AND CON

INTRODUCTION

The object of this chapter is to reveal the methods and arguments used by intellectuals and officials who argue that there are problems in the current form of government which must be solved. Each interested party has a different idea of the path China's culture and literature should take in the future. The conservatives argue that westernization and liberalization of literature may ruin the communist goals. Others argue that even though the basic form of the current government and policies are acceptable, what is actually occurring in society betrays the ultimate goals of the Party. Corruption, elitism, the "back door" are all concepts which are placed into literature in order to reveal the discrepancy between theory and reality. Others may argue that literature has no room for official policy, and writers should be left to create their own works without interference from the state.

THE 13TH PARTY CONGRESS

Literary efforts in China revolve around debates and policies of the Party. In November of 1987, the 13th Party Congress discussed reform and the future of the Party. The consensus of the meetings

will have a huge impact upon literature in the next few years. This particular Congress "marked a remarkable victory for China's reform program following an extraordinary year of political conflict and maneuver--arguably the most contentious year in Chinese politics since the downfall of the gang of four a decade ago."¹ It was in this conference that Deng Xiaoping retired along with a number of veteran party members.

Other conservative leaders such as Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun were also removed from the party. The removal of conservative members was an extraordinary step after the events of 1986. At the party meetings in 1986 the conservatives appeared to be regaining some of their former influence. The leader of the liberal movement in the party, Hu Yaobang, was forced out of the party and the congress began a campaign against "bourgeois liberalization." The literary community was rocked when Liu Binyan, Wang Rouwang, and Fang Lizhi were kicked out of the party.

The actions of the party leaders after the 1986 meeting seemed to foreshadow another movement to curtail the recently gained freedoms of the intellectuals. But when the 13th Congress got under way the following year, Deng forced many conservative leaders into retirement, and a new period of liberalization appeared. Foreign reporters and television media were even allowed to witness some of the proceedings, something which had not occurred in the history of the Congress.²

¹ Joseph Fewsmith, "China's 13th Party Congress: Explicating the Theoretical Bases of Reform," Journal of Northeast Asian Studies (Summer, 1988): 41.

² Ibid., p. 42.

The theme for the 1987 Congress was "Advance Along the Road of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics."³ The Congress spent much time discussing the ideological and cultural aspects of the movement in order to lay a foundation for the post-Deng period. The liberalization of policy is apparent in the party's placement of the Chinese society in the first stage of socialism. In this stage, techniques and theories not necessarily coinciding with strict socialist doctrines are accepted, and the basis for experimentation is laid. Concerning literature, this meant that intellectuals, college professors, and writers would be relatively free of the social constraints placed upon them in the past years.

Socialism as the first stage on the road to communism was regarded as immature communism. This theory took on practical significance in that the party stressed that economic, technological, and cultural development had to be supported so that the transformation of society to communism could occur at a rapid pace. The economic development of the society was and is of the utmost importance to the party leaders. The political and cultural components of society were then made subservient to the development of the economy, rather than being allowed to develop without strict regulation. However, when the 13th Congress placed the economic status of the country at the first stage of socialism, limitations previously imposed on the other sectors were lifted.

³ This slogan had earlier been proposed by Deng Xiaoping. He was trying at the same time to pay attention to the economy while maintaining party control over culture.

The party is wary of lifting and removing the control it has over society, and stresses that the "principle contradiction [faced by China] is between the people's increasing material and cultural needs and the backward social productive forces."⁴ In the previous party campaigns, literature was declared to be subordinate to and the slave of economic development. When these policies and attitudes were adopted in the past, writers were frequently forced to sacrifice freedom of expression and limit their activities to that of supporting the regime and condemning its enemies.

The Four Cardinal Principles of socialism, the people's democratic dictatorship, the leadership of the communist party, and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought were reaffirmed by the current party Congress. But they toned the strict language down in stating that "class struggle will continue to exist to a certain extent for a long time but it is already not the principle contradiction."⁵

Even with the increase of student demonstrations over the dismissal of some of the more liberal and critical thinkers from the party in 1986 and 1987, and the call by many of the more conservative members of the party to crack down on the increase of "bourgeois liberalization," the party addressed the issue of political reform in the 13th Congress and the reformist faction (Deng and Zhou Enlai along with other moderates) managed to pass resolutions stating that the party would try to eliminate the major corruption and problems in the party. The focus of the next few years was to

⁴ Joseph Fewsmith, "China's 13th Party Congress: Explicating the Theoretical Bases of Reform," p. 47.

⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

try to guarantee some level of stability, in which no one's rights as guaranteed by law were overstepped, and to maintain recent cultural freedoms.⁶

This Congress reveals that the political and factional disputes are far from being resolved in the near future. That Deng has taken many of the conservative leaders of the party into retirement with him has been somewhat offset with the recent removal of the democratic leader, Hu Yaobang. This move supporting conservative ideas was continued in the cultural sphere when some of the foremost intellectual critics of the regime were dismissed.

THE ENVIRONMENT OF POLITICAL DEBATE

With this background in mind, literary policy of the post-Mao period begins to be seen as unstable and shifting. The factional disputes and the stress on the socialist ideology have waxed and waned depending on economic, political, and social debates. Thus, literature as a general category and writers in particular have had to be extremely careful of their work. Political discussions which would be far removed from the development of literature in the United States have had a profound effect in China.

Writers and cultural activities in China today have a much broader range of material which they can use in their work than in the past. The discussion of official limitations concerning literature are somewhat misleading. It implies strict control over all aspects of

⁶ Ibid., pp. 55-58.

discussion. But, if this were in fact the case, critiques of the system and particular policies would not have flourished in recent years.

Literature in recent years has been more and more critical of conservative policy and has had much support in the general society. In January of 1987, when the "antibourgeois liberalization" campaign was underway, wall posters attacked the government, stating: "our political system is little better than feudal despotism, or even more ruthless, dictatorial and terroristic."⁷

Wang Xiyan, a novelist and member of the Shanghai P E N Center, was a target during the Cultural Revolution and now has stated his opposition to the bourgeois liberalization campaign. He thinks that Deng's campaigns against intellectuals are a poor method of dealing with intellectuals and their work. However, he states that Deng has at least one very positive aspect about his position-he keeps many of the more conservative members of the Party from attacking the intellectuals, who are much more hostile than Deng and his moderate group of reformers.⁸

According to many Chinese writers, there has been a shift towards conservatism. The editor of the leading literary magazine, People's Literature, has been suspended for his too realistic (read critical) portrayals of the condition of the Tibetan herdsman and aspects of their lives (such as sexual practices and living conditions) which were declared obscene. Wang Rouwang, a famous literary critic based in Shanghai, provides another example when he was

⁷ Mitchel Levitas, "Writers in China: How Long is the Leash," The New York Times Book Review (August 9, 1987): 3.

⁸ Ibid.

stated to have insulted Deng Xiaoping in the following quote: "My compliments to Deng. If he continues this way he could be more and more like Mao Zedong." Finally, Liu Binyan, China's foremost reporter was purged from the Party after criticizing some of its actions publicly.

Party officials may feel threatened by foreign influences, but most authors readily admit that although they may accept, use and admire western literary themes and techniques, China will never merely copy western practices.⁹ Party members are fearful that as liberal practices emerge and become ingrained in society, then they will lose their influence. This would occur regardless of the expansion of the cultural limits, as modernization requires more expertise and ideology can not be at the forefront of an expanding economy.

When students in the spring of 1989 held demonstrations at Tiananmen Square to protest for democracy, the reaction of the government revealed more than policy pronouncements did. Many felt that the students were trying to achieve too much and that the police reaction would reveal how strong the radicals really were. Even though Deng and the moderate reformers are in charge of the political system, there is still a very large component of leftist members whose strength should not be underestimated. And many writers, even though they disagree with Deng's policies, feel that he is doing the best that can currently be accomplished.

⁹ This is a main theme running through many of the modern commentaries concerning the development of Chinese literature. Writers within and outside the country feel that there will not be uncritical acceptance of foreign ideas.

Some of Deng's conservative actions can be seen in a new light. He plays the conservatives off against the liberals to achieve a balance in the Party. The dismissal of the liberal Hu Yaobang was interpreted as an effort to reconcile the leftists who had recently become alienated from the moderates. Peng Zhen, a leading conservative in the Party, stated his opinion of the actions of some of the liberal writers, including Liu Binyan: "We need thought rectification in today's reforms. . . . The ideological trends of bourgeois liberalization and its influence have been reflected in literary and art circles and some erroneous points of view have become rampant."¹⁰

However, the situation of literature seems more secure than it has been in the past. Zhao Ziyang, one of Deng's proteges, supported the liberalization in literature and has publicly stated that cause for alarm did not come from the right but from the leftist radicals who want to enhance their own position without regard to the wishes of the people. It is clear that the moderates need the support of the intellectuals in order to influence the larger population, and the intellectuals need the support of political patrons.

REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES FROM VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

¹⁰ Mitchel Levitas, "Writers in China: How Long is the Leash," p. 26.

One way to understand the opposing ideologies and theories behind the different groups is to look at examples of literature; and more importantly, to look at the criticism and commentary surrounding the themes of a work. What moderates, liberals, radicals, or those who are promoting the separation of art from politics have to say about an individual book, story, essay, or article reveals the important cultural and political themes in a society.

BLOOD-RED SUNSET

The recently published (Spring of 1988) book, Blood-Red Sunset, created controversy and conflict revealing the significance of literature. Its author, Lao Gui, characterized his work as "neither an autobiography nor a novel."¹¹ It is the story of a Red Guard which begins at the start of the Cultural Revolution, in 1966.

The character in the story became a Red Guard at the call of Chairman Mao, and in listening to Mao's call for ideological "vigilance", attacked his own mother. She had been a novelist who supposedly had published bourgeois ideas. Lao Gui, the Red Guard, stole money from his mother (Yang Mo) in order to finance a trip to Vietnam and fight for the revolution. When he returned to China in 1968, he joined the Production and Construction Military Corps in order to increase agricultural productivity. He was sent to Mongolia, where the revolutionaries had destroyed what they had been sent to improve. Hundreds of thousands of acres of grass were cut down,

¹¹ Liu Binyan, "Stark Truth vs. 'False Realism': The Book That Stunned Beijing," The New York Times Book Review (November 6, 1988): 3.

and the radicals managed to destroy the areas they had been working on rather than to create good farmland .

Lao's life changed dramatically after he responded to another call from the party to distrust and reveal that those above had betrayed the ideals of the party. These statements, however, were used by the radicals to declare Lao a counterrevolutionary. He had to live under persecution for eight years and he was finally rehabilitated and got a job on a political and literary journal.

Blood Red Sunset, details the lives of many of the young educated Chinese during the Cultural Revolution. The young population of the 1960's and 1970's now feel that they were used as political tools in a power struggle by the radicals, particularly Jiang Qing and the rest of the Gang of Four. Although Lao Gui did not suffer as many people did in real life, (e. g. he was never imprisoned or tortured), he managed to capture the feeling of betrayal felt by many members of the educated class. They felt that they had been cheated out of years of their lives and that their education would never be made up.

The novel was not just a fictional account of events which placed its "emphasis on formal experimentation [and] tended to evade contemporary social reality."¹² Liu Binyan stated that although the literary trend during the 1980's was to pursue party "realism," and that magazines and books were dominated by party themes, the public did not for the most part accept this new genre.

¹² Ibid.

The shock of Blood Red Sunset was due to the fact that while new literary styles were used to enhance modern fiction, such as stream-of-consciousness, flashbacks, even mysticism; this book used an entirely different approach. It appears as an unsophisticated, journalistic work which merely states the events of the period without romanticizing them. Much of the material in the book is historical fact, so the book takes on an added sense of reality which shocked readers in the mid 1980's.

The leading character of the book is revealed as one who is a real person, susceptible to the same weaknesses that ordinary people are. Some of the shock with the book and with the main character is due to the fact that his experiences; his greed and actions towards his mother, his opportunism, and followed by his isolation and despair when his ideals were betrayed, were easy to identify with. As can be seen in literature of the early post-Mao period, the tragedies of the Cultural Revolution were blamed on Mao and the Gang of Four.¹³ People wanted a scapegoat, and now that the political system had provided them with one, they shook blame from themselves and placed it on an impersonal evil. But the huge dislocations and many victims of the period, whether they were victors or victims at the time, were partially the cause of everyone who was involved.

The novel brought this theme back into focus and discussed the struggle from one single person's point of view, who was in fact responsible for other's injuries. The fact that Lao Gui could act in such a manner revealed for some the weaknesses of Chinese

¹³ Hugh Thomas (ed.), Comrade Editor: Letters to the People's Daily (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1980).

civilization as a whole. Many of those who were Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution had made new lives and wished to avoid looking back at these past examples of cruelty and injustice. Many of the radicals feel that they themselves were victims, and indeed many were persecuted eventually by other radicals. But in the 1980's many of these same people have taken similar theoretical positions to those they had in the Cultural Revolution and persecuted those who would remind them of their flaws:

All the crimes have been laid at the feet of Mao, or Lin Biao or the Gang of Four; none of their followers or supporters believe they share in the responsibility, and some proudly identify themselves as "persecuted veteran cadres." That they were persecuted is indisputable; but if it hadn't been for their persecution of others, which depleted the freedoms of the Chinese people until they could no longer distinguish right from wrong or protect their own condition, China's dictatorship of the proletariat would never have evolved into a fascist dictatorship. If that weren't enough, not only are these veteran cadres who suffered a few days of persecution unrepentant once they return to power, but they are convinced that their behavior has been correct and feel free to take the same old paths.¹⁴

CONSERVATIVE REACTION

The recent literary trends have been a ally of the conservative cadres who wish to forget about their role in campaigns of persecution. They oppose any works which realistically try to appraise historical events and to place blame on individuals in society rather than some far removed evil which they were unjustly forced into dealing with. Those who wish to forget their role in the

¹⁴ Liu Binyan, "Stark Truth vs. 'False Realism': The Book That Stunned Beijing," p. 3.

Cultural Revolution do so in order to advance their current cause without bringing suspicion on to their techniques or ideals.¹⁵ A new form of literature is to serve as the model for the 1980's. The conservatives try to:

[create a new form of literature known as] pseudo-realism [which] superficially appears to deal with life's major contradictions, including the lives of political prisoners in party prisons, it also skirts historical reality. It depicts prison life in magnanimous and benevolent hues; the truly innocent victims, who participated in the Cultural Revolution out of ideological conviction, are portrayed either as criminals or misguided diehard loyalists of the very political force that brought them to grief in the first place. This current form of "false realism" never asks why the real criminals, such as abusive and corrupt officials, are removed from public scrutiny and the truly innocent continue to be attacked. . . . The "veteran cadres" in charge of one political campaign after another since 1949, all of which brought injury to vast numbers of innocent people and ultimately led to the Cultural Revolution, are treated in this brand of realism with kid gloves; their crimes are defended, while young people are castigated for being unforgiving and are urged to learn from these "veteran cadres."¹⁶

The reason why this novel was such a shock was because it did not misplace the blame on other figures; instead, the character had to live with his actions and those done to him. Sometimes it is easier to accept punishment than to engage in punishing others, especially

¹⁵ Perry Link (ed.), People or Monsters? Liu Binyan (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1983), p. 3.

¹⁶ Liu Binyan, "Stark Truth vs. 'False Realism': The Book That Stunned Beijing," p. 3.

after the fact. This is the focus of the novel, a realistic study of events without misplacement of blame.

The "problem" of the novel is that not only does it reveal corruption in the Cultural Revolution, such as massive misappropriations of commodities and favoritism among the political leaders, but that this corruption still exists in the contemporary Chinese society. While the socialist doctrine is given to the masses, the leaders take advantage of their position to gain material benefits. The novel revealed that although millions of people accepted hardships in order to carry out what the leaders told them was the only path to the construction of an ideal society, the same leaders who promoted these ideas acted in the opposite manner.

Conservatives today seem to oppose political and economic changes which would cause them to lose their position in society, defending their position by appealing to the betrayal of the revolutionary doctrines by the moderates and liberals. The system as it currently exists places these cadres in a superior position, one which they defend. The novel does not necessarily portray the cadres in this light, but the logical conclusion to the book would be to look at society in a truly realistic fashion rather than interpreting events using a doctrinaire approach. It is in this light that many oppose its theses and others are shocked by its ideas.

These ideas reveal an undercurrent of controversy not normally viewed when looking at the relationship between literature and politics. However, it must not be taken as the "real" basis of conflict over literature in the modern era. The Chinese cultural society is much more complex and involved than discussion of one

aspect of debate would lead one to believe. For the most part, the relationship between dissent and policy has been a political discussion; but it has focused upon the discussion between the moderates and the conservatives as well as between other groups. Liberal literary dissension may oppose one or both of these groups, calling for political reforms and an end to the conflict between factions which has influenced the rest of society throughout China's modern history.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF LITERATURE INTO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

A better method of viewing the discussion in contemporary society is to view examples of literature and what authors hope to accomplish rather than forming a synthesis between different writers. Granted, many of the messages of individual authors and politicians provide a basis for alliances, which are much needed so that one does not face isolation and is easily singled out. However, these alliances or methods of placing society into general categories depending on their view of the role of literature must be seen as somewhat arbitrary. When writers are singled out, discussion can focus on general trends as well as providing leeway to point out the unique qualities each message or author can provide.

Liu Binyan's comments regarding the remnants of the Cultural Revolution cadres who are still in power can be seen according to his interpretation of society as well as to theirs. The individuality of the radicals and moderates is lost to a certain extent by discussing

"movements" or "campaigns". But the group orientation and discussion of political factions may be lost by focusing too much on individuals. The discussion and interpretation of literature then takes on the added dimension of trying to place the individual within the larger group without sacrificing the individual.

It is impossible to discuss, for example, dissent as a general category, and still give the proper recognition to the individual. What must be done is to focus on the individual and the faction or party within which he works, as well as to try to delineate the differences between the larger, political or factional groups which aid in understanding the society. When the distinction is made between the individual and the whole, as well as breaking the culture into disparate bodies, then the underlying themes of society emerge. Literature provides an excellent tool for differentiating between social and political units because, while it is removed from politics, it is (especially in totalitarian states) uniquely linked to the formal governing apparatus.

The end of the Cultural Revolution and the takeover by the moderate reformers split the society into separate entities; a conservative and a moderate tradition was then placed into the political discussion. Literature reflected this split by initially accusing the radicals of betraying the revolution through their misplaced zeal. As the political struggle lessened and the moderates solidified their position, a new literary movement sprang up. A new sense of liberalism and criticism pervaded much of the literature and many authors who had previously been unable to pursue their careers were allowed to in the late 1970's and 1980's. After the

support given the moderates diminished, as it was not needed for further political struggles, literature began to expand on its own.

Literature as art began to emerge, as did literature as a form of social protest. The modernization of the society brought in many new themes which could and were used by authors. Reality became the standard by which new works were measured, including the subjective reality of individuals who did not necessarily accept any political format as the basis of their discussion. Literature began to move in two different directions: towards social commentary and towards art. Both of these could be interchanged, literature as art could be used as social commentary and they did not have to be opposed to each other.

Authors in the first few years of the moderate rule for the most part followed party policy. But as their techniques and themes expanded, literature moved further and further away from the traditional role which it had previously been assigned to play. As writers emerged and began to be successful, they became more bold and forthright in their criticism of limits in literature and in society as a whole. Literature during the Cultural Revolution was isolated from influences from the outside world. When the limits of the campaign were lifted, authors experimented much as those had done in the early twentieth century.

For the first time in the history of the People's Republic, writers used technique and substance as a tool to comment critically on the government. The difference for the communists in the 1980's was that the communist party was in power, whereas in the early twentieth century, the May Fourth generation formed the nucleus for

only a small political movement outside the mainstream of the society.

With the communist rule came the belief by the political leaders that the remnants of the capitalistic society were going to disappear. But, exposure in the 1980's to the outside world (including Soviet literature, both modern and the nineteenth century radical critiques) threatened this belief. The exposure to the outside world introduced the element of subjectivity into the literature, as opposed to the materialist emphasis called for by the Marxist theory.

Deng Xiaoping's slogan, "seek truth from facts," initially meant to apply to the moderation of political policy and an effort to overturn the actions of the radicals during the 1960's. When put in context with the literary universe, the new trends and ideas put forth by writers can pose a dilemma for the leaders. Deng wanted to get away from the radical repression, but he also wanted to maintain the theory in which the communist party had been the dominant theme since 1949. Writers went too far when these techniques were used to criticize the new direction of the government. Literary dissent was also used to combat what authors saw were the same problems in the 1960's: bureaucratic red tape, corruption and favoritism.

When authors finally began to feel safe about writing what they felt were the problems in society, attacks on the government came from all directions. Students wanted democracy, the conservatives wanted ideological purity, more moderate voices attacked the evils of the structure of society without condemning the party. The modern theories of literature when applied to the Chinese

political and social environment placed the party in a precarious position.

The influence of the western style of literature was based on an extremely critical view of the post-World War One world: "writers and artists came to see the world as chaos or wasteland, and, mistrustful of or repelled by objective reality, turned in on themselves. The only thing they could be sure of was the subjective truth of what went on in their heads."¹⁷ The post-Cultural Revolution writers noted many of the same negative qualities about their society and turned away from the optimistic socialist realism.

Writers argued that in order to modernize society technologically and economically, literature had to expand to develop a new form of consciousness. For a modern society to emerge, people had to be exposed to the concepts which had formed the mindset of the other industrialized nations. Many writers accepted the social responsibility with the new forms of literature, remaining loyal to the party and the rule of the moderates. But they wanted to have the freedom to criticize the flaws as well, something which the party had never accepted.

These movements started a general shift towards a more open and democratic society. The political leaders were correct in assuming that the literary efforts of the intellectuals could not just be critical, and yet supportive, of the party. The trend of literature as art was also a threat to the system. As society opened up, intellectuals demanded more and more freedom to explore in their

¹⁷ D. E. Pollard, "The Controversy Over Modernism, 1979-1984," The China Quarterly 104 (December 1985): 642-43.

fields without having to be responsible for every action or word. All together, these influences could and did form the basis for a political conflict within the party and external to the party. The student riots in the late 1980's reveal that the exposure to new ideas, whether or not they are intrinsically political, influences those most likely to act on their beliefs. The students and many intellectuals began to argue that a more democratic society was needed. The most extreme views have only recently begun to emerge. Throughout the month of April, 1989, students had protested against the single party system and its actions while calling for the creation of a two party system.¹⁸

The policy of the officials in the early and mid 1980's was to direct campaigns against these modernist movements. They called attention to the socialist virtues and placed them in the context of the Four Basic Principles. The moderates formed a powerful political force, and were backed up by the more conservative members of the party who wanted even more ideological controls than the moderates argued for. The liberal and artistic elements have responded by criticizing the campaigns and calling for more democracy and freedom, at least in literature.

The liberals and artistic leaders did not have the political strength which the moderates or even the conservatives had. However, they had the support of the intellectual community, including those scientists and people involved in the material creation of the state. The party responded and threatened specific actions against specific writers. Hu Yaobang stated in an article to

¹⁸ "China protests unprecedented in 40 years of Communist rule," Missoulain 23, April, 1989, p. A-8.

the Renmin Ribao that specific actions should be taken against offending writers. He envisioned four steps to this process, from censure and reproof to incarceration and discipline.¹⁹ The spiritual pollution campaign proved how serious the moderate leaders were in their opinion that literature should serve the socialist society and avoid contamination from foreign influences.

Radical intellectuals, such as He Jingzhi, who was a poet and vice-minister of culture, argued that the new forms of literature betrayed socialism. The new literature was feeble in its outright annexation of foreign literary practices, which He Jingzhi referred to as promoting individualism, anarchism, idealism, and irrationalism.²⁰ He Jingzhi accepted the idea that some pointers could be taken from other literary techniques, but that they should not be allowed to overturn the entire literary society.

Intellectuals responded after the spiritual pollution campaign much as they had in the 1978-1980 period. They were concerned that literature, if repressed, signified a larger political movement which limited freedoms in society. An interesting aspect of the literature of totalitarian states is the influence scientists have had upon the field. They were presumed to be the backbone of technological development and were treated better than many of the other intellectuals engaged in other fields; thus the government was more tolerant of their opinions although the party would much rather have them concentrate solely on their work. However, the scientists supported the new literature of the modern period. Many

¹⁹ D. E. Pollard, "The Controversy Over Modernism, 1979-1984," p. 649.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 651.

scientists felt that those people who used fiction to argue against political dogmatism or corruption created the basis for a society which could place more emphasis on more well rounded technological development.

FANG LIZHI

One of the best examples of these scientists was Fang Lizhi, who was recently expelled from the communist party for his ideas concerning the nature of the Chinese state. After the spiritual pollution campaign ended, the intellectual atmosphere began to thaw. In order to create a climate in which the society could industrialize, the moderates decided to allow more individualism and freedom of expression. The same lines between the moderates, radicals and liberals existed, but the balance for the time gave more freedom to the liberals. Fang Lizhi, in 1986 a fifty-two year old astrophysicist, led the scientific community in calling for democracy.

Fang was first criticized in the anti-rightist movement in 1957 and expelled from the Party. He had recently written an article calling for support of independent research by the government and was persecuted for this idea. At this time, Fang still continued to accept communism:

For a long time after the Anti-Rightist campaign, I continued to believe in communism. . . . Even after I was expelled from the Party, I continued to have faith in Chairman Mao and believed that it must have been I who was wrong.²¹

²¹ Orville Schell, "Fang Lizhi, the inspiration for student unrest, is China's Sakharov," The Atlantic (May 1988): 36.

As a scientist, unlike many writers, Fang was allowed to keep his position at the Institute of Modern Physics Research. But during the Cultural Revolution he was persecuted as were most other intellectuals and was sent to the countryside to work with peasants. Fang stated that he lost his belief that the communist party and Mao in particular could reform society because he felt the party leaders only cared for themselves rather than for the people.²²

Although Fang was allowed to engage in limited research and teaching, he was not fully rehabilitated until 1978. Fang felt that the duty of the concerned scientist was to aid society in more than just their work: "Scientists must express their feelings about all aspects of society, especially when unreasonable, wrong, or evil things emerge. If they do otherwise, they will be considered accomplices."²³

In 1984, Fang was promoted and became the vice-president of the University of Science and Technology. In his new position he promoted giving power to individual departments rather than the administrators above them, but more importantly Fang advocated free speech for students and faculty. Fang came to feel that his particular area of concern was not as important as trying to reform the educational system of the whole society. Fang supported the intellectual community in declaring that the nature of the communist party was not open to true development and did not encourage freedom to write and to research:

²² Ibid., p. 37.

²³ Ibid.

Some of us dare not speak out. But if we all spoke out, there would be nothing to be afraid of. This is surely one important cause of our lack of idealism and discipline.

Another cause is that over the years our propaganda about communism has been seriously flawed. . . . Room must be made for the great variety of excellence that has found expression in human civilization. Our narrow propaganda seems to imply that. . . nothing that came before us was of any merit whatsoever. This is the most worthless and destructive form of propaganda. Propaganda can be used to praise Communist heroes, but it should not be used to tear down other heroes. We Communist Party members should be open to different ways of thinking. We should be open to different cultures and willing to adopt the elements of those cultures that are clearly superior. A great diversity of thought should be allowed in colleges and universities. For if all thought is narrow and simplistic, creativity will die. At present there are certainly some people in power who still insist on dictating to others according to their own narrow principles. We must not be afraid to speak openly about these things. In fact, it is our duty. If we remain silent, we will fail to live up to our responsibility.²⁴

This speech, made in 1985, after the spiritual pollution campaign had ended, heralded a new era of creativity and freedom for intellectuals. The party seemed to accept this view, and Fang's ideas were reprinted by a number of journals. Intellectuals stated that they needed freedom so that they could improve their values, and officials should respect that or doom China to a backward state. His attacks on the party made him a singular figure in China, and many people supported him. Gradually, however, the Party began to put pressure on him to tone his attacks down. His call for democracy

²⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

and intellectual freedoms ran counter to the prevailing Party view of hierarchy.

Fang's attacks expanded to criticize socialism. He stated in another speech that no post-World War Two socialist country has been successful economically. He told the audience that Mao's policies had been a mistake and that even Deng's modernizations did not advocate the right values, such as democracy, creativity and freedom of speech.²⁵ Fang felt that basic human rights should be granted by the Party so that it can no longer act in a dictatorial manner.

The reforms advocated by Fang and other intellectuals, in particular Wang Rouwang and Liu Binyan, seemed to take on a much larger dimension in the winter of 1987. Student demonstrations advocated freedom and human rights; the Party leaders responded attacking who they felt were the causes of the disturbances, the intellectuals to whom the students listened. While the Party was fairly tolerant towards the students, it attacked what it described as "wholesale westernization," which was opposed to socialism.²⁶

Fang was accused of departing from socialism and was removed from his position as vice-president. Articles appeared in official papers supporting Fang's removal and backing up the decision declaring that he was violating the basic rules of the Party. Deng Xiaoping soon after denounced Fang as well as Wang Rouwang and Liu Binyan. Students protested these activities, but the officials quickly put down the demonstrations. It was in this context that Hu

²⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 44.

Hu Yaobang was ousted from the Party as well for failing to deal with the student demonstrations. Hu was accused of being too liberal. This reaction was followed up by official proclamations and actions removing these people from the Party.

Even though Fang had been isolated by the Party from the intellectual community, his ideas were still accepted, although not publicly. His speeches were copied and mass produced by newspapers and were distributed within the Party. They were intended to be used to criticize Fang's ideas, but they sometimes had the opposite effect. Party members who previously knew little about Fang Lizhi now had access to his speeches, and many of them accepted some of his ideas.²⁷

Fang stated in an interview with Lu Keng that he was allowed to travel to the west and that other intellectual writers, especially Liu Binyan, were not, because:

The country apparently needs to learn from the West only in science and technology, but not in the humanities. . . . [China's future would be based upon]. . . freedom of speech and freedom of the press, among other freedoms which are provided for by this Constitution. . . . For only freedom of speech will be able to break the tyranny of 'one-Party voice' and bring about the realization of political pluralism.²⁸

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 46-47. The party members themselves became a force for reform, at least many who allowed themselves to accept Fang's underground comments. Many members of the very organ which was to make sure that the population was not exposed to these ideas changed their ideas due to these and other similar articles.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

The People's Republic has, under Deng Xiaoping, emphasized the scientific development of society. It has felt that the future of the state lies in the proper cultivation of scientific intellectuals. However, scientists in general have been outspoken on social issues and sympathize with many of the basic themes which the literary world has promoted. Fang Lizhi is perhaps the best example of this unity between the sciences and the development of humanities, especially literature.

LIBERALIZATION OF LITERARY RESTRICTIONS

The campaigns against intellectuals in the late 1950's and during the Cultural Revolution, as well as the spiritual pollution campaign of the 1980's, have served to connect intellectuals. Foreign ideas have influenced both the sciences and the humanities, and gradually the Party leaders have begun to accept that literary freedom will have to accompany the technological development of the society. The scientific community has been relatively untouched compared to the humanities, but the same basic socialist doctrines dominate the discussion between public officials and the intellectuals.

Universities have begun to offer courses in comparative literature and to study foreign authors who have been previously regarded as reactionaries by the Party. Creative fiction and writing have expanded from the dogmatic socialist doctrines to include modern themes such as romance and studies of economic exploitation

within the communist state.²⁹ Intellectuals have remained within the Marxist framework by arguing that: "we should further eradicate dogmatism and the ossified pattern and carry forward the creative spirit of Marxism."³⁰

The party has realized that China lags far behind other countries and has come to accept a certain amount of freedom. Writers have begun to experiment and engage in what has become known as dissent. Literature and the freedom to expand the scope of discussion have gone so far as to reintroduce some of the early twentieth century Chinese authors, such as Hu Shih, who were considered reactionary. The campaign in the 1950's against Hu Shih's work has, in 1988, been at least partially overturned. His work in the 1910's included trying to introduce the vernacular language into literature and to adopt western literary styles. That reevaluation of his work has been allowed reveals that literature is expanding its scope.³¹

Literature has recently become more and more free from domination by political officials. Journalism and the journalistic style of reporting have focused upon social life and in China, this "reportage literature" has taken on an important role of representing social problems which need to be addressed. The reportage style of literature has been used to write stories and books as well. Many are

²⁹ Xiao Qian, "Recent Changes in Chinese Literature," Beijing Review (October 31-November 6, 1988): 25.

³⁰ Xue Muqiao, "Away With Dogmatism & Ossified Pattern," Beijing Review (January 25-31, 1988): 18.

³¹ Ningjun Wang, "Artists, writers urged to produce better works," China Daily Beijing (14 November, 1988): 1.

based upon fact and written in the traditional form of a fictional story. However liberal these trends have seemed, there are still some signs that the flaws pointed out by these works have gone too far:

For all its merits, though, reportage literature has shown some unhealthy signs. Some writers are too much given to seeking novel themes and sensational news. Others are exclusively obsessed with commenting on social issues but overlook the integration of reporting with literary skills. In addition, many writers, afraid of being left out of the swim, rush to write reportage works. This could mean that the potential of reportage is being over-taxed and the reading public is being given too much of this kind of literature, boding ill for its future.³²

Intellectuals have recently argued that China needs to adopt a more democratic system of government. The difference between earlier protests is that the recent developments have clearly stated their goals. Intellectuals have in the past accepted, and many have supported, the goals of socialism. But recent years have witnessed the upsurge in criticism of basic tenets of socialism carried on through literature. In January 1989, intellectuals showed their support of democratic reforms by meeting in a major Chinese bookstore and leading discussions supporting literary efforts promoting democratization, if not reform.³³

Some of the works produced by intellectuals using literature to focus on social problems will be discussed to reveal specific themes

³² Yang Yi, "Reportage rises to literature," China Daily Beijing (7 September, 1988): 4.

³³ Dorinda Elliot, "Intellectuals Are Waking Up," Newsweek (March 6, 1989): 34.

which authors try to bring out. Chinese authors in the modern period no longer write to be accepted by officials, but so that the public will read their work and also so that the public may identify with the characters. This new approach accounts for much of the upsurge in the popularity in fiction and literature.

EXAMPLES OF CRITICAL LITERATURE

Bai Hua's screenplay, Unrequited Love, which was to be made into a movie titled "Sun and Moon", was criticized by the Party for its political message. The story revolves around a painter who returned from his overseas position in order to answer the call by the Party for intellectuals to help rebuild the country. The painter returns because of his patriotism, he is "rewarded" by eventually losing his job and family, and is sent to a barren countryside where he is forced to steal in order to survive. The final moment of the work has him making a path, due to his delirium, in the snow in the shape of a question mark, where he finally dies.

Bai Hua was attacking the Party's hypocritical condemnation of those who it had called in order to rebuild society. The final moment of the work reveals that there is no purpose in sacrificing one's life and work in order to help a system that has absolutely no concern for its people. The importance of the work lay in the message that the leaders of the Party, Mao in particular, had let the country down. When the sun set over the painter's dying body, it symbolized the lack of concern given by the Party (the sun symbolized Mao).

The screenplay was published in the liberal post-Mao era and was still severely criticized because of its treatment of Mao and the Party. Even though it was condemned as bourgeois liberalism, it was still made into a film. It was, however, withheld from general release.

A Novel by Li Peng was criticized in the spiritual pollution campaign. The book, When Sunset Disappears, is a modern Chinese version of Romeo and Juliet, with the K M T and the Communist Party serving as the warring families. The novel also discusses the Cultural Revolution in its series of false actions condoned by the radicals which ruin the lives of others. It is divided into four periods; each section of the book is named after a season. The basic story follows the lives of two young lovers during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution.

The first stage of the book, Spring, portrays Li Huaiping as a young boy whose father is a general in the Communist Party. His girlfriend, Nan Shuang, is the granddaughter of a K M T general. The two meet and fall in love with each other but are separated by circumstances beyond their control.

The next section of the book, Summer, begins with the Cultural Revolution. The man, Li has now signed up to be in the Red Guard and in his activities against counterrevolutionaries comes across Nan's grandfather. When the woman, Nan, witnesses the brutality of the Red Guards towards her grandfather, her love for Li fades.

The next section of the book is entitled Winter, not Fall, because of the deep tragedies which the Cultural Revolution has caused. As the Cultural Revolution finally begins to draw to a close,

Li learns that Nan has turned to Christianity. When her grandparents tell her that they want her to be married she tells them that because she was once in love with Li, she no longer wishes to marry.

In the next section, Fall, Li is hopeful that he can finally get to marry Nan. However, events of the Cultural Revolution have also made Li a victim. His mother died during persecution, and he has lost his father. When he finally is rehabilitated, he joins the service. When on leave visiting a sacred mountain, he meets a monk who forms a lasting impression upon him. He finally meets Nan on the mountain, but she says that all she wants to do is live the rest of her life out alone and to remain withdrawn from all other people and society.

In the final section, when Li meets a monk on Taishan, the monk discusses with Li the need for Truth, Beauty, and Goodness which are required for the development of a modern society. These virtues represent science, art, and religion, respectively. The following monologue by the old monk reveals the difference for the author between these ideas and materialism:

The old gentleman halted and stood in the middle of the Heavenly Way. He gave me an unusually penetrating look, and then said with a faint smile, "Young man, what you say is quite right; humanity requires satisfaction in emotional life and the enjoyment of beauty, and science can not supply these; it can only allow us to gain an understanding of nature. But what you say is not complete. According to you, there is something beyond truth, and this is beauty. But you have forgotten that beyond beauty is goodness. It is the search for truth, beauty, and goodness that constitutes the whole spiritual life of humanity. What seeks truth is science; what seeks beauty is art; and what seeks goodness is religion. . . . It

should be apparent from this that religion takes morality as its basis, and does not really conflict with science. But in recent times ignorant people have set about testing and overturning the existence of Heaven on the basis of their experience in this dusty world, and it is for this reason that we have had these endless contending theories and quarrels!"³⁴

Li finally meets with his old lover, Nan, as she is a translator for foreign tourists on the same mountain. Their final parting reveals that the fate of two people was decided long ago, by events beyond their control, and it also reveals the authors' perception of how the future should be regarded:

"Now that book has become a bequest from your mother. For fifteen years, I have always kept it with me as a treasure. If you would like me to return it, I. . . ."

"No, keep it as a remembrance."

Our hands clasped once and then relaxed. I could feel the cool of the fog in the palm of my hand. She took a slow step back. I gravely raised my hand to the visor of my cap.

"Goodbye." She nodded her head slightly.

"Goodbye." I looked directly at her.

She didn't look at me again, but slowly turned and walked away along the path to the guest house. She walked away into the darkness with graceful and confident steps, treading the autumn grass, and soon vanished in the obscurity of the night. When she had reached the top of the guest house steps, beyond the reach of my vision, the calm sound of Nanshan's voice began to appear amid the talk and laughter that reached me from far away.

³⁴ Michael S. Duke (ed.), Contemporary Chinese Literature: An Anthology of Post-Mao Fiction and Poetry (New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1985), pp. 66-67.

I stood by myself at the intersection on the Heavenly Way, looking intently through layer after layer of fog toward the place where Nanshan had disappeared, turning over in my memory the words she had left me, and which I had not entirely understood. By this time, my heart felt calm, composed, and full of strength. From this time on, Nanshan was gone from my life for good. All memories that she had left with me for fifteen years and all the longings of my youthful dreams were gone far away with her. Yes, what is past is gone; henceforth our field of vision should turn towards the future.³⁵

The novel was very popular and was admired for its humanistic approach to life. The novel revealed many of the feelings that other people had during the Cultural Revolution, and it depicted the idealism which subsequently turned to disillusionment with the political world and society. The novel was attacked in 1983 because of this humanism and because, supposedly, it was not historically accurate. Just as important, the officials condemned it because of the sympathy shown towards the K M T general. The class division which the Party had inculcated within the people was treated as an arbitrary and even cruel distinction by the author, and thus the social consequences of the book were harmful to the public. That the heroes turned to and admired religion in one form or another merely added to the insult taken by the Party. The author reflected on the disillusionment at the same time the Party wanted to promote the virtues of socialism, so the book was condemned.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 79.

After the end of the spiritual pollution campaign, authors proclaimed what they viewed should be the future direction of literature. Most writers were fearful of the leftist persecution which always seemed just around the corner. Lu Wenfu was quoted at a literary conference as stating that the right (the liberal writers) would not dare use the same tactics which the left had used against them, but if some method were not used, then the writers obviously did not have much power:

People opposing the right have many methods, "forcing opinions," "creating discussion," "holding big criticisms," "collecting materials," "dealing with the people through the 'organization.'" Of course, we should not use these reprehensible methods to oppose the Left. But how can we do it? Writers should think about this.³⁶

The prevailing opinion among writers seemed to be along the same lines as Yuan Ying, the art editor of the People's Daily, who wrote:

In literature and art, the history of leftism is long and deep, the damage great. . . it has reached the point that although the Gang of Four was smashed eight years ago, there has still been no strong and clear criticism of leftist thought. There has even been a strange phenomenon: in the economy, leftism is opposed, but in literature and art, rightism is. This is not logical, practical,

³⁶ Heng Liang and Judith Sharpiro, Cold Winds, Warm Winds: Intellectual Life in China Today (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), p. 177.

or defensible.³⁷

Writers and literature in general were much more fragile than economic reforms, and their fragility was frequently made apparent as the moderate official Party members time and time again addressed what they felt were severe problems in society. When writers demanded increased political participation, even though they were admired in society, the Party clamped down on literature because of its revealing nature and support it gave the new movement for democracy. Liu Binyan's piece, "The Second Loyalty," and a play and a novella, Half of a Man is a Woman, by Zhang Xianliang, were criticized by the Party in 1985 because they were promoting unethical political and moral values.

Party officials wanted literature to serve socialism. Instead these works promoted entirely different values. Liu's story discussed the hero of the Cultural Revolution, Lei Feng, and found his patriotism short sighted and lacking in true loyalty. True loyalty lay in serving the Party even if it meant disagreeing with it.³⁸ Liu also advocated better relations with Russia, something which was always a sensitive subject with the government. Zhang took a different route with his work, which was partially a sexual interpretation of the activities of the Red Guards. They were so violent, according to the book, because they were frustrated sexually. After the Cultural Revolution, when the two violent Red Guard characters from the

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Perry Link (ed.), People or Monsters? Liu Binyan, Introduction.

novel met and married each other, they became more stable individuals.³⁹

Writers in China began to look on their mission as one of revealing the faults of society, regardless of the consequences. Their knowledge of the outside world revealed to them the dissident literature of Russia and the Eastern bloc countries. With the political movements at home and the exposure to the foreign elements, the Party found it increasingly difficult to silence these writers.

Beyond the use of literature for the discussion of social issues, there has also been a movement for literature to develop at an artistic level. Although in China this is all connected to political and larger cultural questions because the government defines literature as a tool for the education of the people, the movement for art in itself has been in existence throughout the history of the regime.

Many writers felt that literature did not necessarily have to have an explicit or implicit social message, from any perspective. In China, the movement for the development of literature as an art form has had to ally itself with the larger literary movement. If literature is allowed to concentrate on its artistic development, then some writers feel that modern Chinese literature will greatly improve. China's tradition in the twentieth century has been based almost entirely on socially dominant themes, going back to before the May Fourth Generation. Perry Link, in his introduction to Roses and Thorns, stated that social commentary would remain more important because of the historical value placed on this method in China:

³⁹ Heng Liang and Judith Sharpiro, Cold Winds, Warm Winds: Intellectual Life in China Today, pp. 182-83.

While their desire for progress in writing technique was certainly genuine, most writers in 1979-80 were nevertheless still guided by the more traditional concept of the writer as spokesman for the people and for the truth about China. These expectations were equally widespread among readers. . . . A poignant problem . . . in this collection. . . was the problem of pride for an ancient and resplendent civilization that now finds itself "underdeveloped" in the modern world. This problem, which has lain at the core of Chinese thought and letters for about a hundred years, has seldom been treated so honestly or sensitively.⁴⁰

The literature of the Maoist period stressed that the peasant or worker and the goals of socialism were to be combined in fictional works. To write about the intellectuals and their lives was considered elitist and even contributed to the counterrevolution. When the moderates took over, writers began to write about what they knew best, their own experiences and lives. Works began to appear looking at the conditions of the intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution which were also to provide a warning for future intellectuals and readers of the potential threat posed by the government in its sometimes arbitrary actions.

Cao Guanlong's story "Three Professors" follows the fate of three different professors during the Cultural Revolution. Two had been prominent intellectuals, and the other was a talented playwright. The radical leaders, in their zeal to carry out revolutionary ideals, had reduced two of these men to menial jobs while the other was imprisoned for his betrayal of the revolution.

⁴⁰ Perry Link (ed.), Roses and Thorns: The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 31-32.

All of the characters died by the end of each story, their demise reflecting the failure of the Cultural Revolution.

The playwright was killed to provide a corneal transplant for a party leader, who eventually died in a supernatural manner when the death that was in the eyes of the young playwright transformed itself in the party member's eyes to an illusion of fire. The Party official himself died by trying to put out this fire and threw himself in a pond. This story focuses on the hypocrisy of the party which states to act in the best interests of the people when in fact the only concerns of the radicals are for opportunities for their own improvement. The doctor who transplanted the cornea was to be rewarded, after he had successfully completed the operation, by having his child placed in a university. The party official of course, all the while speaking Mao's cliches, was only concerned with his own problems. Anything that got in the way was attacked using this radical ideology.

The professor in the story, "Locks," tried without success to criticize himself and to follow the party line. However, he was struck by an overriding impulse to carry out his work as a mathematician. When he saw an old manuscript of his lying in the office of the Special Investigation Team, he devoted his time to trying to learn how to pick the lock so that he could get his work. When he finally broke into the office, he became so absorbed in his manuscript that he lost his sense of time and was discovered the next morning reading in the office. Of course, the consequences of such an action could never go unpunished, and the Special Investigation team responded accordingly.

The other story, "Cats," reveals the life of a professor who unwittingly kills his pet cat. As his wife had died after throwing herself out a window, the cat was his only companion. Its death left him crushed, and he had carefully wrapped up the cat and taken it to the garbage as a form of burial. When the cat's corpse was found the next day, it was blown up into a counterrevolutionary plan which showed that someone (the professor) hated Mao. In the Shanghai dialect, "cat" and "Mao" are homonyms. Therefore, whoever killed the cat actually was voicing their disapproval of Mao. At the end of the story, the professor is finally driven crazy in his attempt to hide from the radicals, as he would surely be put to death, and jumped out of a window.⁴¹

This work was condemned by the party because the author was too pessimistic. The Party allowed and even appreciated criticism of the radical activities which had occurred during the previous ten years, but it also wanted to create a positive feeling towards the existing party. Cao had originally "published" this story by putting portions of it on a university wall during the Democracy Wall period. It received high praise from those who read it, and many identified with the lives of the intellectuals portrayed in the stories. The Party, however, was not as enthusiastic and proclaimed it "literature of despair."

The lives of the intellectuals and the actions of corrupt Party officials were popular topics of the new period of writing. As Cao discussed the lives of the intellectuals, other writers wrote about the

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 111-145.

difference between the idealism of the party and its actions which were much different than the stereotypical patterns would lead the casual observer to believe. China's foremost figure in what became known as reportage literature, Liu Binyan, concentrated much of his work upon the corruption of the Party and the opportunism engaged in by party members.

LIU BINYAN: SYMBOL OF CRITICISM - AND SUBSEQUENT PARTY REACTION

Liu was born in 1925 in Jilin Province and grew up in the Japanese occupied regions in China. He joined the Communist Party after 1943 when he aided the communists in the war effort. After the People's Republic was created, Liu went to work as a journalist and editor for the magazine, The Chinese Youth. In the late 1950's Liu was declared a rightist because of his attacks on the faults of the Party bureaucracy. His writing was declared to be a "poisonous weed" and, like many other intellectuals, he was sent to the countryside to learn from the peasants.⁴²

As the anti-rightist campaign faltered with the failure of the Great Leap Forward, Liu was rehabilitated and was allowed to continue his work for next few years. With the onset of the Cultural Revolution, Liu once again was targeted as an enemy of the people. After his persecution over the next eight years, from 1969 to 1977, Liu was again rehabilitated. His new placement was with The

⁴² Perry Link (ed.), People or Monsters? Liu Binyan, Introduction.

People's Daily. Liu continued the style of literature he had been pursuing, using the means of journalism combined with fiction, in order to carry on what he felt the duty of a reporter was. This duty was to expose the weaknesses and flaws in society so that they may be attended to by both public opinion and appeal to higher levels of authority if required.

His reputation quickly grew because of his piece, "People or Monsters?" His style of writing became known as reportage literature. Liu, along with a few other outspoken intellectuals, began to argue for the reform of the communist party which, Liu and others stated, was corrupt throughout the country. "People or Monsters?" was concluded by Liu as a warning to the rest of the country, that there were people like the main character, Wang Shouxin, everywhere in the Party. The task of writers and the people was to expose these people so that true socialism could emerge. His work was a huge success, and even though it was criticized by the Party for creating a negative and pessimistic mood in the people, Liu revealed that the letters he received were very supportive and popular, a cause not for worry by the Party but for celebration that the people were concerned about socialism and the state of the Party.⁴³

Although Liu's criticism had been tolerated until the mid 1980's, the Party finally responded to his public claims of corruption in the bureaucracy and the further criticism that very little was actually being done by the party to rectify matters, by kicking him

⁴³ Perry Link (ed.), People or Monsters? Liu Binyan, pp. 1-10. See Appendix 4 for reproduction and comments on this speech.

out of the Party. This time, the officials chose to act in a somewhat tolerant manner and allowed Liu to remain on his post as vice-chairman of the Chinese Writers' Association.⁴⁴ The official position regarding Liu has been publicly stated by He Jingzhi (deputy head of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee) :

Writer Liu Binyan is . . . (still the vice-chairman). . . If he really realizes his mistakes, and wishes to return to the Party, the Party will bid him welcome. . . . He had committed a mistake of big proportions, that is, "speaking one's mind without reservation."⁴⁵

He responded to questions in the article revealing that the Party feels that Liu wanted to change the basic nature of the Party and to engage in activities which eventually hurt the Party. Liu's repeated criticisms of the Party bureaucracy, calling them "lackeys of the Gang of Four," supposedly hurt many innocent people who did not deserve the attacks Liu brought on, either directly or indirectly. When Liu responded to warnings by attacking the Party leadership and questioning its actions, he was expelled.

The story "People or Monsters?" revolves around Wang Shouxin's quest for power and money during and after the Cultural Revolution. The story reveals the Party in Bin County with only a very few exceptions to be corrupt. The connections, abuse of the public (the "masses"), along with the backdoor policy, nepotism, and the outright bribery of the Party leaders in this county is revealed

⁴⁴ He Jingzhi, "He Jingzhi on Liu Binyan and Lin Xinwu," Beijing Review (May 25-31, 1987): 28.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

by Liu through his work, half fiction and half fact. The heroes in the story are those who have been punished by Wang and her compatriots for trying to make the Party act in the manner for which it was created. The Party of the Wang Shouxin's of the world operates on the basis of self gratification, and anyone who got in the way was punished. The majority of the population, needless to say, became the real victims of her greed.

The story is based on a real character and situation, and Liu Binyan took a risk in researching and finally publishing the work. When Wang's embezzling of over 250,000 dollars was finally brought into the open, the corrupt Party clique at Bin county was finally brought under control. However, Liu reminds us at the end of the story:

The case of Wang Shouxin's corruption has been cracked. But how many of the social conditions that gave rise to this case have really changed? Isn't it true that Wang Shouxins of all corners of the land, are still in place, continuing to gnaw away at socialism, continuing to tear at the fabric of the Party, and continuing to evade punishment by the dictatorship of the proletariat?

People, be on Guard! It is still too early to be celebrating victories. . . ⁴⁶

CONCLUSION: AN EMERGING DIALOGUE?

The relationship between those voices calling for criticism of the Party is balanced by both the radicals who want even more strict

⁴⁶ Perry Link (ed.), People or Monsters? Liu Binyan, p. 68.

ideological control of the Party and intellectuals and the moderates who currently operate somewhere between these two extremes. The artistic development of literature can only occur when the society allows more freedom for each writer to explore what he or she feels most comfortable with. Social commentary will continue to dominate Chinese literature for some time, not in the least because of the importance the Party attaches to fiction and its use as an educational tool.

Writers, whether for or against the system, influence policy both positively and negatively. For the most part, writers have not forced the Party to do more than respond to the outrage reflected in literature by the use of expulsion from the party, or campaigns against spiritual pollution. Writers have been used as targets for political battles, and literature has been used in a larger framework of political and economic struggle. However, there are signs that the intellectuals and literature in the future will have a more positive effect upon policy. The decision by the moderates to allow such outspoken critiques as Liu Binyan and Fang Lizhi freedom, however limited, has in effect opened up the system for further contributions.

The Party will not tolerate the removal of the basis for its existence in the system, the support of the "masses," but it has tended to allow more discussion, as can be seen in the recent demonstrations for democracy. The Party focuses on the dimensions of national power and political stability, and the threat from literature may be that it supports liberal forces in society which will eventually promote alternate forms of government, especially if the Party can not deal with the problems of how to create a popular

bureaucracy and to develop economically. The recent student protests after the death of the ousted Party leader, Hu Yaobang, have revealed that the limits of discussion have expanded a great deal over the last ten years.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

"The first step in liquidating a people," said Hubl, "is to erase its memory. Destroy its books, its culture, its history. Then have somebody write books, manufacture a new culture, invent a new history. Before long the nation will begin to forget what it is and what it was. The world around it will forget even faster."¹

This statement is from the work of a Czechoslovakian dissident, Milan Kundera. He wrote in the wake of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, describing the social and cultural plans of the soviets. The soviets, Kundera writes, wanted to guarantee that the new culture of the communists not only survived but flourished. The only way to maintain this culture was to somehow create new heroes. New artists and new writers were needed to create this world. In order to accomplish the Soviet model, the old style had to be attacked as something anathema to the construction of an advanced, civilized, and more just system. When a new system was put into place, then the work of the communist model could be started in earnest. Not only did the soviets expel and censor the traditional and western literary styles, but they persecuted those who formed the cultural basis for the old society.

The similarity between the eastern bloc countries and China does not stop with the actions of the government towards literature

¹ Milan Kundera, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting Translated by Michael Henry Heim, (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 159.

in order to create a new culture. In Czechoslovakia, the writers who were denounced after 1968 were the very same ones who were the radicals after World War Two. They formed the basis for the communist movement because they felt something had to be done to remove the nation from the traditional forms of oppression. Marx supplied the theory, and communism provided the opportunity to advance into the next century.

In China, the May Fourth Generation of writers who became radicals felt much the same way, and much of the work of these figures, with few exceptions (such as Lu Xun), was later declared to be opposed to the communist rule. That the post-Mao generation of writers and literature is outwardly discussing the development of literature and culture in a broader sense provides a much greater sense of optimism than the writing of men like Kundera would suggest for Czechoslovakia. The Maoist solution to the problems of its rule and the construction of communism ran parallel to the Russian plan. During the Cultural Revolution, the radicals felt that if they could wipe out the old culture, attack Confucius and Lin Biao, or Liu Shaoqi, the vacuum would then be filled by the Marxist model.

The radical model which was to be the future of China can be seen in the literature of the period. Workers who sacrificed their lives for a donkey and lovers who separated for the good of the country were the heroes of this generation of leaders and writers. The radicals stressed the primacy of the Party and the Maoist ideology over the past and the present. They set out to destroy those which produced an alternative to their designs. Thus, the Buddhist

temples were vandalized, artworks destroyed, books condemned and intellectuals persecuted.

In the post-Mao period, the moderate communist Party leaders accepted that the basic Marxist ideology was intact and should serve as the model for the future. But they realized that the country could not survive the destruction of its culture, its literature and its intellectuals. If the cultural past were destroyed, there would be no basis of stability other than the Party in society, and obviously the Party could not replace the nation's historical culture using only communist doctrines. Contact with the western world and China's own past, along with the breakdown of society under the radicals, had left the door open for a resurgence of literature and culture. Writers, artists, and actors encouraged a revival of the May Fourth Generation style of literature and social commentary. That the government tolerated new forms of literature and a broader content rather than promoting only the ideological theories of the radicals (or the moderates) signified that the system was willing to open its grip in order to create a new atmosphere in the country.

Calls for democracy are founded upon the belief that the Chinese socialist state can produce a form of government responsive to the needs of the people. Literature in the past has not played much of a part in creating communist policy, but the years since the death of Mao have begun to witness literature as a more potent force. As the one party system at times discourages communication and promotes unity rather than taking care of complaints, literature can be used as a loyal opposition or as a tool to criticize the government. Literature as the "Fourth Estate" will be a potent factor

in the years to come. The student demonstrations in the spring of 1989 have shown that the government wishes to avoid conflict as much as those protesting in Tiananmen Square. Moderation in political struggles occurs when there is a dialogue between the officials and opposing factions. When dialogue can occur, it may lead to a further stability and widespread support of the communist state.² When the different components can communicate using whatever means available, they may be able to achieve a new stability and prosperity.

The breakdown of the Chinese intellectual community can be generally broken into four groups: radical party ideologues, moderate intellectuals and writers, and two other groups existing not necessarily in opposition to the the radicals and the moderates, but offering a format for cultural and political discussion. Most of these intellectuals do not oppose the Party rule outright or the principles of communism, but they do oppose the injustices and corruption which have arisen during the first forty years of the PRC. The distinction between the two other intellectual groups is somewhat arbitrary, and their boundaries merge. It is more of an analytical distinction, used to reveal the interests of the larger culture.

One group of intellectuals is composed of, for lack of a better word, writers who have created a tradition of dissent. A novel such as Li Ping's When Sunset Disappears, or short stories such as Cao Guanlong's "Three Professors" are social commentaries and offer alternate views of society opposed to those of the moderates or the

² See Appendix 5. Letter from BSFU

radicals. Liu Binyan's work is in much the same line; he is even more critical of the government, and other leading intellectuals have taken a stand with Liu arguing that there should be a more open and responsible form of democratic government.

The second group singled out is the movement in China for the development of literature for the purpose of art. The primacy of political development has overshadowed literature as "art." The socialist government argues that the nature of the cultural sphere and literature is to serve as the basis for educating the masses in the finer points of the marxist ideology. Literature as art opposes the use of literature as social education by its mere existence. That art as such could develop reveals a shift by the political leaders as well as the influences from foreign sources and from other intellectuals. Techniques such as "stream of consciousness", romantic literature, science fiction, and mystery novels have all witnessed a resurgence in the late 1970's. The existence of this form of literature may improve the overall quality of Chinese writing, especially when the traditional Chinese literary techniques can be put back into a proper cultural context.

The moderate intellectual element is alive in China as well, not the least because of the political patronage given by the current leaders. The story of the railroad engineer by Zhang Lin reveals the virtues which the current leaders advocate. The discussion between the moderates and the liberals in the 1980's has been literary at least as much as political. The two views are being argued on the pages of magazines and novels. In the past, literature and writers have had not much influence over political affairs. They were usually

just tools to advertise out the directives of one faction or another. In the 1980's, however, the writers have become a political force able to marshal popular support on their own. The support given Liu Binyan or Fang Lizhi are just two examples of the support in society for the type of voice people are beginning to demand in order to keep whatever evils they see in check. At present, the liberal intellectuals do not have the power to hold their position against the moderate intellectuals and their patrons, but this may be changing in the near future.

The existence of radical writers and intellectuals has diminished greatly since the downfall of the Gang of Four after their height during the Cultural Revolution. This is not to say that their ideas do not wield a vast influence in the present society. The mere fact that the radicals once had power and that the tragedies of the Cultural Revolution took place still dominate writing and planning. Many Party members who gained their position during the Cultural Revolution are still in prominent positions, and moderate officials such as Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang have to try to balance the interests of their faction not only with the liberals, but the radical and the liberal division of interests is still a potent enough force to make them respect both sides of an issue. Among university members, intellectuals, and writers, there are not as many radical members as there are moderates or liberals. But the existence of a strong bloc within the party of radical ideologues has prompted many writers and commentators of contemporary China to theorize

that after Deng's death, there could be another resurgence of radicalism.³

The control over writers in China today has been the subject of many articles and novels. One quote from a western commentator reveals a widespread view of the current balance in Chinese policy concerning intellectuals:

This is an ongoing fight between those who believe in a more liberal society and those who want a dictatorial society. So even though I think the antibourgeois liberalization campaign is now petering out, the struggle will continue. Too many die-hards in the party won't allow intellectuals to speak their mind.⁴

The 1980's have, nevertheless, witnessed a reemergence of literature focusing on the ills of the society. Confucian themes, humanism, and the May Fourth tradition have become more popular than the ideological themes of the radicals. There is not one dominant theme in literature, though. The Propaganda Department promotes those works which best represent its ideals, and the liberal intellectuals tend to be published in other journals. Many of these writers have been chosen by western professors and publications for translation.

In China's recent past, a writers' patriotism was questioned if he or she did not produce works which the government said had used the accepted themes. In the 1980's, writers and intellectuals

³ Andrew J. Nathan, Chinese Democracy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 87. The futuristic story discussed at the opening of the chapter reveals the concern over rule by individuals rather than a system of law.

⁴ Mitchel Levitas, "Writers in China: How Long Is the Leash?" The New York Times Book Review (August 9, 1987): 26.

have responded to this questioning by discussing the real meaning of patriotism. Bai Hua, a Chinese writer, made a distinction in his work between the love one has for the country and the love one has for the government. The term "zuguo", used by Bai Hua, signifies the love or patriotism for the people and the country, but not necessarily for the government or political party.⁵

This term helps to reveal the position of the intellectual towards his or her work. During the Cultural revolution, if writers did not adopt writing techniques or themes which portrayed the party or country in a positive light, then their patriotism was questioned. Writers in the modern period were allowed to raise such questions as whether or not a writer, if he were to act according to his conscience and point out flaws and problems in society, with the intention of trying to improve that country, was appreciated by the country. For the most part, liberal writers condemned the actions of the party in this regard. They felt that although they were among the most ardent and vocal patriots, they were not allowed even the simplest voice of questioning a corrupt authority.

Thus, in today's China, writers are beginning to have a more powerful voice in changing political policy. One must not forget that the Party controls literature, or tries to, in order to achieve political purposes. Whereas in countries such as the United States, where literature and journalism can have a profound effect upon politics, in China during the communist rule this has not generally been the case. The Party has always acted to control literature; writers have

⁵ Michael S. Bloom, Blooming and Contending Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 167.

had very little power to argue and incite people to actions other than those sanctioned by the Party. Intellectuals today in China have a much larger ability to speak out and raise issues of importance which sometimes the government would rather have left untouched.

The impetus for the present power of liberal journalism and literature came from the takeover of power by the moderates after the downfall of the Gang of Four. The Party allowed more freedom to criticize in order to gain sympathy for its position and to solidify its strength. However, the intellectuals, when allowed this bit of freedom, were not satisfied with merely backing up one faction of the party in preference to another. Writers in the late 1970's and the early 1980's went further than the moderate faction wanted, calling for reform, change of policies, and control over a corrupt Party and bureaucracy.

The scope of the political struggle in the 1980's has changed from one of internal factional fighting among party members to a more open discussion. This could not have been accomplished without the efforts of at least a few outspoken members of the intellectual community. Whereas the literary struggles in the past had been of supporting one faction or another, or, for example in the Cultural Revolution, of use of literature to "expose" class enemies or enemies hidden within the Party, recent fiction and intellectuals have stressed making the government responsible to more than its own position and power.

The shifting of the Party position in the 1980's towards literature has revolved precisely around this theme. When intellectuals were seen to promote and get support for ideas which

could not be accomplished within the present structure or by the Party itself, then periods of relative conservative reaction set in. Part of this reaction is caused by the power of the radical Party officials. The moderates realize that there is still a large and powerful radical faction within the Party, and they have to be taken into consideration when making literary policy. More important is the idea that the moderates, in control of the government, control the amount of freedom tolerated within the society. When writers or their work go too far, or the government senses a larger movement in the society, then it steps in with a "spiritual campaign," or purges leaders of a particular movement.

Present literature revolves around these political themes and is highly susceptible to the current political position. Its power, though, should not be underestimated. The May Fourth Generation is perhaps the most important example of the effect a literary and consequently a political movement can have upon a society. Writers and officials in China are aware of this fact and act accordingly. China in the 1980's has become more open, and there have been more and more calls for freedom so that people may improve their own lifestyles. Literature also reflects the desire of the common person to be removed from political debates so that they may go on about creating a better life for themselves. In the past this would have never been allowed, but now the government realizes that this ambition can serve as a motivation to encourage economic and industrial development.

Literature and intellectuals in general have been given more freedom to encourage these themes, but the party always wants to

ensure that it has the final say, thus, cultural questions will continue to revolve around the political questions of the day. Western themes and writers attract the attention of Chinese in the 1980's, and interest in literature as social criticism or art has increased, but the Party still stresses that: "China's literature should be socialism oriented. . . with the characteristics of patriotism, collectivism, socialism, and communism."⁶

Literature has taken on a whole new perspective in the 1980's. Aware of the potential power of fiction, which can serve as the basis of a political movement, writers have concentrated on the faults of the Party. Real debate has emerged between those who hold power and those who argue that the system should be more open and subject to popular control. Writers want a more equitable, responsive system; moderate government officials, while obviously accepting that the government exists for the people and thus is of the people, are not willing to open up the debate to the point where their authority is questioned.

China in the 1980's has fluctuated between periods of relative freedom and periods of campaigns against the freedom of intellectuals. The basis of controversy, according to the liberal intellectuals, is that freedom of thought must be guaranteed before any society can be said to be modern. Government officials have kept stressing the freedoms and toleration allowed, and, relatively speaking, they are correct. Campaigns such as the spiritual pollution campaign or the recent expressions against bourgeoisie liberalization

⁶ Ian Buruma, "The Might of the Pen," Far Eastern Economic Review (26 December 1988): p. 37.

have limited this freedom. Liu Binyan, one of the most outspoken members of the intellectual community, has commented upon the importance of freedom of discussion and the harm done by a government which does not allow debate. Literature may serve many purposes. In modern China it seems to be a tool not just for the government propaganda but for the creation of a more open and free society. Liu summarizes the importance of the freedom of expression by relating the Constitution of the United States to China's contemporary problems:

Take this whole opposition to Bourgelib [an abbreviation for bourgeois liberalization], for example. Even now they talk of it and won't hear of it being discarded. It is a question of the freedom to speak and write. Some countries use a more inclusive term: freedom of expression, which includes such things as demonstrations, marches, and strikes--a way for the masses to express their will. This type of expression is part and parcel of the freedom of speech. This is something to which I paid particular attention to when I visited America. There is a great deal of published material dealing with the subject there. The First Amendment to their Constitution states that the most sacred thing is [freedom of] speech, belief, and so on, and that neither government nor Congress can curtail it. Isn't there a lot of talk about the "Double Hundred" Policy [i.e. letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend] in China? It's just shorthand for the freedom of speech, creativity and scholastic research. There has been a silent debate on this subject raging throughout our vast land; it is a debate that has been bathed in blood and tears. In my opinion the freedom of expression is not only necessary for the solution of some major problems, it is bound up with the whole state of a nation's vitality. There are many things the politicians don't even dare think of, and they won't let you think or talk about them either. Why should they

let you waste your time thinking about such things? Over a period of time this attitude corrupts the nation, everyone becomes a mediocrity. The whole race becomes mediocre.⁷

The Chinese government has since repressed the open rebellion of the spring of 1989 and has taken steps to guarantee its authority by arresting or trying to arrest the intellectual leaders of the demonstrations. The view of this thesis is that while these measures may work in the short run, recent developments in China, whether social, economic, or technological, will soon force the government to listen to the demands made upon it.

⁷ Geremie Barbe and John Minford (eds.), Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience (Hong Kong: Far Eastern Economic Review, Ltd., 1986), p. 355.

APPENDIX 1 The Evening Talks at Yanshan

The following excerpts from Daubier's book, A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution discusses Deng Tuo's "Evening Talks at Yanshan," to reveal how he criticized the radicals and how the Maoist intellectuals reacted to his work. The following appendix is a selection of a few of Deng's articles which reveal the method of opposition writers.

This document offers a fairly good idea of how the opposition operates within the Chinese Communist regime. Resorting to allusion and innuendo, to varied and often ingenious figures of speech to camouflage its real meaning, the opposition never appears openly or in its real guise. The comments included in boldface are the official interpretation of Deng's work.

COMMENT In our opinion, Deng Tuo's "Evening Chats at Yanshan" is a lot of double talk against the Party and socialism. Therefore, we made our own compilation of passages from the Evening Chats and added a number of comments. It is our hope that the readers will make a comparative study of our extracts and those compiled by Front Line, the Peking Daily, and the Peking Evening News.

1. Venomous Attacks Against Our Great Party

Attacks against the scientific thesis: "The East Wind Prevails Over the West Wind"-Treatise on "Great Empty Talk" and "Cliches"

Some people have the gift of gab. They can talk endlessly on any occasion, like water flowing from an undammed river. After listening to them, however, when you try to recall what they have said, you remember nothing.

Making long speeches without really saying anything, making confusion worse confounded by explaining, or giving explanations which are not explanatory-these are the characteristics of great empty talk.

We cannot deny that in certain special situations such great empty talk is inevitable, and therefore in a certain sense is inevitable, and therefore in a certain sense is a necessity. Still, it would be deplorable if this practice should spread and be indulged in

at every possible opportunity, or cultivated as a special skill. It would be even more disastrous if our children should be taught this skill and were turned into specialists of great empty talk.

As chance would have it, my neighbor's child has been in the habit of imitating the great poets and recently he has written a lot of great empty talk....Not long ago he wrote a poem entitled "Ode to Wild Plants," which consists only of empty words. The poem goes as follows:

The Venerable Heaven is our father,
The Great Earth is our Mother,
And the Sun is our nurse;
The East Wind is our benefactor,
The West Wind is our enemy.

Although such words as heaven, earth, father, mother, sun, nurse, the East Wind, the West Wind, benefactor and enemy catch our eye, they are used to no purpose here and have become mere cliches.

Recourse to even the most beautiful words and phrases is futile, and the more such cliches are used the worse the situation will become. Therefore I would like to advise my friends who are given to great empty talk to read more, think more, say less, and when it next befalls you to have the floor, beg off and go get forty winks. In that way, you will not only be saving your own time and energy, but also the time and energy of other people.

"Great Empty Talk," Front Line No. 21, 1961.)

COMMENT: "The East Wind prevails over the West Wind" is a scientific thesis advanced by Chairman Mao Tse-tung at the Meeting of Communist and Workers' parties on November 18, 1957. It says by way of a vivid image that the international situation has reached a new turning point and that the forces of socialism are prevailing over the forces of imperialism. The East Wind symbolizes the antiimperialist revolutionary forces of the proletariat and of the oppressed people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The West Wind symbolizes the decadent forces of imperialism and reaction in all countries. It is entirely correct to praise the East Wind and to detest the West Wind. Why then should Deng Tuo pick up the statement, "The East Wind is our benefactor and the West Wind is our enemy," and malign it as great and empty talk and a cliché? We know that Khrushchev revisionists have incited people to "oppose the dogmatic theories concerning a mythical competition between the 'West and

East Winds' more boldly and resolutely." Thus Deng Tuo is here singing the same tune as Khrushchev.

From this derives the insinuation that the leadership of our Party is "full of vanity" and has "nothing but disdain for the masses"

The wisdom of a man is never unlimited. Only an idiot fondly imagines that he knows everything and has an inexhaustible supply of wisdom, for that in fact is absolutely impossible. Some people appear clever, but strictly speaking they are only seemingly clever or only clever in a trifling way and cannot be considered really clever, let alone wise.

Lao Tze took an extreme position in this matter, and later the Kings of the Six Kingdoms went to the other extreme. The former wanted to obliterate all wisdom and good sense and negate everything, whereas the latter relied on their own wisdom and became blindly conceited. Naturally, neither attained good results. The error derived from the fact that they failed to attach sufficient importance to the wisdom of the masses.

The best ideas can only come from the masses. During the reign of the Emperor Yuan of the Han Dynasty, Prime Minister Kuang Heng memorialized the Emperor: "I have heard it said that one should consult the multitude and follow their advice, and in so doing one is doing as Heaven wills." The famous scholar Cheng Hsing, who lived at the time of Emperor Kuang Wu of the same dynasty, also advised the emperor "to seek advice on all sides and accept suggestions from below." Fan Ya-fu, the son of Fan Chung-yen of the Sung Dynasty, gave the following advice to Szuma Kuang: "I hope you will be modest and take into consideration the opinions of the masses. One need not plan everything oneself. When a man plans everything himself, flatterers will seize the chance to say things that please him." The views of these ancients are all very sound. Fan Ya-fu's idea that "one need not plan everything oneself" is deserving of special attention. Some people, however, are always boastful and conceited; they look down on the people and make all decisions themselves in the hope of achieving success with original ideas and reject good advice from below. If such people are not aware of their shortcomings and do not try to overcome them, they will eventually suffer heavy losses.

("Is Wisdom Reliable?" from Evening Chats at Yenshan, Vol. LV, pp. 17-19, first appeared in Peking Evening News, February 22, 1962.)

COMMENT: Why should Deng Tuo dwell today on such old stories as that of Kuang Heng advising Emperor Yuan to "consult and follow the multitude" and of Cheng Hsing advising Emperor Kuang Wu to "accept suggestions from below"? He is obliquely attacking our great Party as "being conceited and looking down on the people." This becomes clear when we compare what he says with the slanders about us spread abroad by the Khrushchev revisionists. Are not Deng Tuo's words identical with the modern revisionists' vilifications of our Party?

In which our Party is spoken of disparagingly and accused of "going back on its word" and of being "untrustworthy"

Many are they who suffer from afflictions of one sort or another [...]; one of the afflictions is called "amnesia," and he who suffers from it cannot easily be cured.

The symptom of this affliction is that the person suffering from it often goes back on his word and fails to keep his promises; one is even inclined to suspect him of feigning stupidity, and he is therefore unworthy of one's confidence.

In New Stories from Aitse, Lu Ch'ou, who lived in the Ming Dynasty, relates a typical case of amnesia:

A man from the Kingdom of Tsi was so absent-minded that once he had started walking he would forget to stop, and once he was lying down could never remember to get up. His wife was very worried, and gave him a piece of advice: "I've heard that Aitse is an ingenious man full of wisdom," she said, "and that he can cure all sorts of worrisome afflictions. Why don't you go and see him?" "Allright, I will," her husband replied, and off he went on horseback, taking his bows and arrows with him. He had only gone a short distance when he was overcome by a terrible urge. He dismounted, stuck his arrows in the ground, and tied his horse to a tree. When he had relieved himself, he turned his head to the left and saw the arrows. "Lord, that was a close shave! Where did those arrows come from?" he exclaimed. "They just missed me!" He turned his head to the right and, when he saw the horse, cried happily: "I had a terrible fright, but I've gained a horse!" He was about to remount the horse and set out again, with the reins in his hands, when he stepped in his own stool. He tapped his foot and whined, "Damn! I've stepped in dog shit and ruined my shoes!" He gave the horse a swat and set off on the way home. When he arrived he hesitated in front of his own door and asked himself aloud: "Where am I? Is this the

Honorable Aitse's house?" When his wife saw him ruminating, she understood that he had once again lost his memory and began scolding him. The man, taken aback, replied: "Madam, we haven't had the pleasure. Why are you saying such unkind things about me?"

To all appearances, this man suffers a serious case of amnesia. One cannot yet say precisely what form it will take when it reaches its peak, but in all probability madness or imbecility.

According to ancient books of Chinese medicine [...] one of the causes of amnesia is purported to be the abnormal function of what is called the "breath of life." This is why the patient not only suffers lapses of memory but little by little becomes unpredictable, has great difficulty speaking, becomes irascible, nonsensical, and a raving lunatic. Another cause: a brain tumor. The sick person becomes numb from time to time, blood rushes to his head, which tends to provoke fainting spells. If he is not cared for in time he will become an idiot. Anyone who discovers that he is suffering from these symptoms must take steps to make sure he gets complete rest, and desists from speaking and from any activity, for if he persists in speaking he is courting disaster.

Aren't there any tried and true methods for treating this illness? There are, of course. For instance. [...] when the moment of crisis occurs, take a pail full of dog's blood and empty it on the sick person, then throw cold water on him and clarify his mind. According to Western medicine, one method consists of hitting the patient on the head with a blunt instrument specially made for that purpose, in order to put him in "deep shock," after which measures are taken to bring him around.

*
(Special Treatment for Amnesia,"
Front Line, No. 14, 1962.)

COMMENT: The attacks contained in this article clearly reveal a deep-rooted hate of our great Party. Nowhere in any medical books is there mention, as a symptom of amnesia, that the person afflicted "goes back on his word and does not keep his promises," is "unpredictable," "nonsensical," or "a raving lunatic." Nor is there any mention made therein of any treatment involving dog's blood or blunt instruments. Lu Ch'ou's New Stories from Aitse fall into the category of political satire, and have no relationship with anything medical. The fact is incontrovertible.

In which the leadership of our Party is villified and called a "Weeping Choukeh Liang"

There is nothing more pitiful than a weeping Choukeh Liang. This nickname appears in an anecdote entitled "Kuo Ni compares himself to Choukeh Liang," in volume 15 of the Pillowbook of Yue Ko, the grandson of Yue Fei. The story goes:

When he was head of a garrison to the east of the river Huai, Kuo Ti had walls constructed around two cities. With him was Kuo Ni [...] Kuo Ni was so overbearing that no one dared challenge him. One day on a fan he penned these lines:

Three visits to the thatched cottage for advice on matters of State,

Under Two rulers, the minister has furthered the power.

Thus Kuo Ni took himself for Kongming (Choukeh Liang). [...] One summer I went to Setchow and I noticed that the fans reserved for the guests bore the above lines. It was then I realized that what I had heard was not an idle rumor. After the defeat of Kuo Chou at Fuli, then of Kuo Chouan at Yitchen, Kuo Ni, in a state of despair that he was powerless to remedy the situation, began to cry in the presence of his hosts. Peng Fa-chouan, a judge, was a witness to it. A man of wit, he declared to his friends: "What we have here is a 'weeping Choukeh Liang,'" The witticism was much repeated and much appreciated. When it came back to him, Kuo Ni was furious and wanted to punish Peng. But Kuo Ni was stripped of his functions before he had an opportunity to put his plan into action.

The Weeping Choukah Liangs like Kuo Ni are simply ridiculous and nauseating. Still, the story shows that he who passes himself off as Choukeh liang intimidates no one, and will finally be revealed under his true guise and be the laughingstock of one and all.

("Three Kinds of Choukeh Liang," from
Evening Chats at Yenshan, Vol. IV, p. 12
first appeared in Peking Evening News, March
1, 1962.)

COMMENT: To whom is Deng Tuo referring when he fulminates against what he calls "Weeping Choukeh Liang," and by saying that "he who passes himself off as Choukeh Liang" will inevitably "be revealed in his true guise"? If he is alluding to the bourgeoisie and the landowners, there is no point in resorting to such ambiguous terms. The only conclusion one can draw is that these insults are aimed at Party Leadership.

2. Wherein Complaints Are Made About Injustice to the Rightist Opportunists Who Were Dismissed from office, Praising Their Anti-Party "Inflexibility" and Encouraging Them to Make a Comeback.

Speech for the Defense of Li San-tsai, Minister of the Interior and Minister of Finance, Who Was Dismissed from Office.

Among the historical figures of Peking, Li-San-tsai of the Ming Dynasty, a native of Tingchow, has long fallen into oblivion. This is regrettable for students of local history.

When I recently talked with a few friends, all historians, his name happened to crop up. When I returned home, I looked into a few tomes of history and only then did I discover that the verdict rendered by old historians on Li San-tsai is very questionable and should be reassessed.

Li San-tsai (also known under the names Tao Fu and Hsiu Wu) earned his doctor's degree in the second year of the reign of Wan Li. he served successively as "Deputy Imperial Prosecutor," "Governor of Fengyang," and "Secretary of the Board of Census." He opposed the prevalent methods of collecting the minings tax and was an active supporter of the Tunglin Party. He is a well-known figure in the History of the Ming Dynasty.

The History of the Ming Dynasty, compiled early in the Ch'ing Dynasty by Chang Ting-yu and others, contains a biography of Li San-tsai which concludes with the following sentences by way of summing up: "A man of great talents, San-tsai was fond of stratagems and adept at ingratiating himself with other court officials. During the thirteen years he served as governor of Fengyang, He made friends all over the country. Being unable to keep away from corruption, he was attacked by others. Those who later censured San-tsai, like Shao Fu-chung and Hsu Chao-kuei, were all followers of Wei Ching-hsien whose names were on the list of traitors, while those who recommended him, such as Ku Hsien-cheng, Tsou Yuan-piao, Chao Nan-hsing, and Liu Tsung-Chou, were all distinguished high officials. Therefore, the public regarded San-tsai as a wise man."

The History of the Ming Dynasty characterized Li San-tsai as a man "fond of stratagems and adept at ingratiating himself with court officials." This is not a complimentary remark. If that had been true Li san-tsai would have been a political schemer and intriguer. But the facts tell another story. According to The Truthful Record of Emperor Shen Tsung, in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth years

of the reign of Wan Li (Emperor Shen Tsung) Li San-tsai time and again memorialized the emperor on the abuses perpetrated in taxing mines. He boldly exposed the crimes committed by the eunuchs in collecting such taxes, their wholesale extortions and transgressions of the law. In the thirtieth and thirty-first years of the reign, he again repeatedly memorialized the emperor, expressing his opposition to the mining tax and proposing the prevention and control of the floods and droughts by dredging rivers, digging canals, and building sluice gates. The emperor accepted none of these proposals; on the contrary, he punished Li San-tsai by "depriving him of his salary for five months." How could he be described as being "fond of stratagems and adept at ingratiating himself with the court officials"?

Ashe had repeatedly memorialized the emperor to no avail, Li San-tsai begged to resign from office and retire home.

Of course, the "Tunglin Party" also emerged at the time to attack feudal politics, and "San-tsai maintained intimate connections with its members." For this reason, the corrupt diehard officials violently attacked Li San-tsai as well as the members of the Tunglin Party such as Ku Hsien-cheng and Kao Pan-lung. Small wonder that subsequently Wei Ching-hsien and his gang should have regarded Li San-tsai together with the Tunglin party as their sworn enemies.

It was only natural that, incited by the eunuchs, the corrupt diehard forces represented by Shao Fu-chung and Hsu Chao-kuei should have heaped abuse on Li San-tsai. They accused him of being "a great villain feigning loyalty and a big hypocrite feigning uprightness," and listed his four major crimes of corruption, guile, deception, and tyranny." Even after Li San-tsai had finally returned home, they again trumped up the charge against him of "stealing imperial timber to build his private mansion." Perhaps this was the factual basis of the statement in the History of the Ming Dynasty that he was "unable to keep away from corruption." But Li San-tsai repeatedly memorialized the emperor, asking that "eunuchs be sent to conduct a trial," that "court officials come to investigate," and that "emperor personally hear my case." He seemed to be in the right and self-confident, but the court of Emperor Wan Li did not dare make a thorough investigation of the facts. Isn't that as clear as day?

Judging by the facts about Li San-tsai during his lifetime and those facts which came to life after his death, we should regard him as a positive historical figure, though we cannot say that his character was entirely blameless.

("In Defense of Li San-tsai," from Evening Chats at Yenshan, Vol. V pp. 1, 2, 104,

first appeared in Peking Evening News,
March 29, 1962.)

COMMENT: Li San-tsai was an insignificant figure . He was a butcher who suppressed peasant uprisings. But Deng Tuo described him as a good official who spoke out for the people and worked for their welfare. He defends him because of his dismissal from office, saying that he was "in the right and self-confident." Why was he? It is easy to see that Li San-tsai was a man of the type of Hai Jui. The truth is, under the guise of defending Li San-tsai, Deng Tuo is really demanding justice on behalf of the rightist opportunists.¹

1 The expression refers to P'eng Teh-huai and those who supported him.

APPENDIX 2 The Sixteen Point Decision

A selection of a few of Mao's Sixteen Points reveals that the importance of education and literature to the Cultural Revolution had a sustained impact upon the history of the People's Republic. The document as a whole is "indispensible to understanding the Cultural revolution; it is, in essence, the revolution's charter."¹ The emphasis placed upon literature and the education of the masses as well as the intellectuals reveals the radical answer to the economic problems of China. Mao's personal hope was that the bureaucrats and the party technicians would be purged in favor of those who would achieve an ideal using ideal methods and principles. The controversy surrounding these ideas is still existent today, if only muted.

1. A New Stage in the Socialist Revolution

The great proletarian cultural revolution now unfolding is a great revolution that touches people to their very souls and constitutes a new stage in the development of the socialist revolution in our country, a stage which is both broader and deeper.

At the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth central Committee of the Party, Comrade Mao Tse-tung said: "To overthrow a political power, it is always necessary first of all to create public opinion, to do work in the ideological sphere. This is true for the revolutionary class as well as for the counterrevolutionary class." this thesis of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's has proved entirely correct in practice.

Although the bourgeoisie has been overthrown, it is still trying to use the old ideas, culture, customs, and habits of the exploiting classes to corrupt the masses, capture their minds and endeavor to stage a comeback. The proletariat must do the exact opposite: it must meet head-on every challenge of the bourgeoisie in the ideological field and use the new ideas, culture, customs and habits of the proletariat to change the mental outlook of the whole of society. At present, our objective is to struggle against and overthrow those persons in authority who are taking the capitalist road, to criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois academic "authorities" and the ideology of the bourgeois and all other exploiting classes and to transform education, literature and art and all other parts of the

¹Jean Daubier, A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 297.

superstructure not in correspondence with the socialist economic base, so as to facilitate the consolidation and development of the socialist system.

8. The Question of Cadres

The cadres fall roughly into the following four categories:

- 1) Good
- 2) Comparatively good;
- 3) Those who have made serious mistakes but have not become anti-Party, anti-socialist rightists.
- 4) The small number of anti-Party, anti-socialist Rightists.

In ordinary situations, the first two categories (good and comparatively good) are in the great majority.

The anti-Party, antisocialist Rightists must be fully exposed, refuted, overthrown and completely discredited and their influence eliminated. At the same time, they should be given a chance to turn over a new leaf.

11. The Question of Criticizing by Name in the Press

In the course of the mass movement of the cultural revolution, the criticism of bourgeois and feudal ideology should be well combined with the dissemination of the proletarian world outlook and of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought.

Criticism should be organized of typical bourgeois representatives who have wormed their way into the Party and typical reactionary bourgeois academic "authorities," and this should include criticism of various kinds of reactionary views in philosophy, history, political economy and education, in works and theories of literature and art, in theories of natural science, and in other fields.

Criticism by anyone by name in the press should be decided after discussion by the Party committee at the same level, and in some cases submitted to the Party committee at a higher level for approval.

16. Mao Tse-tung's Thought Is the Guide to Action in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

In the great proletarian cultural revolution, it is imperative to hold aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought and put

proletarian politics in command. The movement for the creative study and application of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's works should be carried forward among the masses of the workers, peasants and soldiers, the cadres and intellectuals, and Mao Tse-tung's thought should be taken as the guide to action in the cultural revolution.

In this complex great cultural revolution, party committees at all levels must study and apply Chairman Mao's works all the more conscientiously and in a creative way. In particular, they must study over and over again Chairman Mao's writings on the cultural revolution and on the Party's methods of leadership, such as "On New Democracy," "Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art," "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work," "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership," and "Methods of Work of Party Committees."

Party committees on all levels must abide by the directions given by Chairman Mao over the years, namely that they should thoroughly apply the mass line of "from the masses, to the masses" and that they should be pupils before they become teachers. They should avoid being onesided or narrow. They should foster materialist dialectics and oppose metaphysics and scholasticism.

The great proletarian cultural revolution is bound to achieve brilliant victory under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Party headed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung.

Appendix 3 Lu Xun and the Role of Intellectuals in Revolution

Lu Xun was a member of the larger literary movement dedicated to the radical overthrow of the KMT. The writers and artists of the May Fourth generation applied themselves to critiques of the contradictions between government propaganda and what was really occurring in society. Lu Xun criticized the nationalist movement led by the KMT because of its elitist attitude and its failure to unite the populace. This excerpt from Lu Xun's work is aimed at the business members of Shanghai who stated their allegiance to the nationalists only so that their interests were represented and defended.

It is the same in nature: the sparrow hawk falls upon the sparrow, the discreet and silent sparrow hawk upon the cheeping, peeping sparrow; the cat falls upon the mouse, the discreet and silent cat upon the squeaking, squealing mouse. The ones who open their beaks and mouths are the ones devoured by those who keep their beaks and mouths closed. . . . I am afraid that certain writers in revolutionary circles, those who like talking about the powerful relationship between literature and revolution, about the possibility of using the press to spread, kindle, quicken, carry out revolution, produce, I think, nothing but useless articles, because good works of art are not made to order. They have nothing to do with the hope of making money or with the fear of loss, and spring quite naturally from the heart. If one begins by assigning the subject for an article, it is not suprising if one falls into a stereotyped style which is not only without literary value, but naturally incapable of arousing the reader. The fact is that in order to portray the revolution, one must be a revolutionary.

As for revolutionary literature, it is not urgent that we think about it. When revolutionaries begin to produce literature, it will be revolutionary literature. I do believe, of course, that there are ties between literature and revolution. The literature of revolutionary periods is different from that of ordinary periods. Once the revolution has come to pass, it is true that literature changes color. But, while great revolutionas can change the color of literature, it is not the same for small ones, for it is not just any revolution that can change the color of language. How many times have I heard the word "revolution"! In Jiangsu, in Zhejiang, they talk about revolution.

People who hear the word are frightened. People who say it are in great danger. However, the revolution is not such a strange thing. It is through revolution that society corrects itself, that mankind progresses, evolving from the worms that men once were into human beings, moving from barbarism to culture, so that there is no movement in time that does not belong to revolution.¹

¹Jean Chesneaux, Françoise Le Barbier, and Marie-Claire Bergere, China From the 1911 Revolution to Liberation (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), pp. 182-183.

Appendix 4 Liu Binyan and the Role of Literature

The following excerpts are from a speech given by Liu Binyan to the Fourth Congress of Chinese Literature and Art Workers in Beijing. His ideas represent a large and increasingly more vocal sector of the Chinese intellectual community, those that use literature for a social purpose. Liu also speaks for those who want to improve the quality of literature as well as attacking injustices, especially those created by a corrupt government. Intellectuals in China, Liu states, are well-suited to writing about concrete facts of existence throughout the country, from the prison to the countryside. The writers task is to reveal the themes pervading the society and to not merely reproduce the arguments of those in power. The future prospect for the writer lies in his or her ability to represent a valid viewpoint opposed to the status quo.¹

1. Face Life Squarely, and Listen Carefully to the Voice of the People.

Of the middle-aged writers present at our Fourth Congress on Literature and Art, the most active and prolific in the past two years have been comrades such as Bai Hua, Wang Meng, Deng Youmei, Gong Liu, Shao Yanxiang, Cong Weixi, and Liu Shaotang. Considering their actual age, they should not look as old as they do. Just look at Bai Hua, with his head of white hair, and Gong Liu--who has entirely lost his hair. Whose fault is this?

If mistakes have been made, I must ask why it is that scientists are permitted their mistakes, and so are politicians, while writers alone are forbidden to make mistakes. It is said that the mistake of the scientists are forgivable because they produce no "social effects"; but then what about the mistakes of the politicians? Which is larger--the consequences of a politician's mistake or the consequences of a writer's? How many times larger?

Those of us here today are fortunate to be alive and well, to have our "rightist" labels removed, and to be able once again to serve the people with our pens. But we musn't forget all the young people who wre implicated with us twenty-two years ago. They were also

¹Perry Link (ed.) People or Monsters? (Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 1983), pp. 1-10.

labeled "rightists." Some of the verdicts on them have not been reversed even today. I am thinking of our comrade Lin Xiling, whose fate has been even worse than ours. I hereby appeal to all those in authority, including those in leadership of People's University, to expedite the rectification of these cases. These "rightists" have lost more than twenty of the most precious years of their lives, and don't have very many to go. The question of their exoneration simply must not be allowed to drag on any longer.

But looking back over the last twenty or more years, I feel we have gained certain things in spite of our losses. Fate brought us into intimate contact with the lowest levels of the laboring masses; our joys and worries became for a time the same as their own. Our hopes were no different than their own. This experience allowed us to see, to hear, and to feel for ourselves things that others have been unable to see, hear, or feel.

In my own personal experience, the most unforgettable years were 1958-60, when I shared a bed and even sometimes a quilt with poor peasants. The things I saw in the villages, and the complaints I heard from the peasants, were all vastly different from what was being spread by the authorities and the press. Whom was I to believe? I had resolved at the time to obey the Party and to remold myself from the bone marrow outward. But there is no avoiding the fact that objective, material things are more powerful than subjective, spiritual ones. However great my will to reform, it was no match for the continual onslaught of certain plain incongruities. For example, higher authorities told us that our impoverished gully of a village ought to build a zoo and a fountain. Now, what were peasants who hardly ate meat all year supposed to feed lions and tigers in a zoo? With no water source--with man and beast still drinking rainwater--how were they to build a fountain? A struggle began to rage deep inside me: how could two diametrically opposed "truths" coexist in the world? The longings of the peasants were one truth, and the policies of the higher-ups and the propaganda in the newspapers were quite another. Which should I follow? Not until 1960, when Party Central issued its "Twelve Points on Rural Policy," did I finally get my answer. It was right to uphold the interests and demands of the people. Anything that ran counter to their wishes was ultimately untenable.

This year we have seen the reappearance of Ru Zhijuan's "The Misedited Story" and Liu Zhen's "Black Flag," both of which are stories about these same years I have just been speaking of. We should ask ourselves what the "social effects" would have been if stories like these had been permitted publication twenty-one years

ago. Would the masses have risen in opposition to the Communist Party? Would the Peasants have rebelled? History tells us they would not have. The effect of these short stories would have been quite the opposite: they would have helped the Party to see its mistakes while there was still time to make changes. Such changes would have heightened the Party's prestige, strengthened the collective socialist economy, and stimulated peasants both economically and politically. Recent experience taught us time and again that true harm to the prestige of the Party and socialism is not done by literary works that describe problems, but by the problems themselves, problems that would have been caused by our own mistakes and by the destructiveness of our enemies. Had writers during 1958-60 been able to hold their heads high, to speak out on behalf of the people, to uncover mistakes, and to expose the destructiveness of our enemies, this would, in fact, have been the best way they could have upheld the Party and socialism. Yet in 1958 no one was writing works such as those by Liu Zhen and Ru Zhijuan, and even in 1962, when Party Central summed up the lessons of the 1958-60 period, no one could write stories that told the truth about peasant life. Not for twenty years--not until the third years after the "smashing of the Gang of Four"--did People's Literature and Shanghai Literature publish these two stories, thereby claiming for literature some of its rights to tell the truth about life. Even today we have to admire the political courage of these two editorial boards.

We should try to learn from our experience, and I have three points to offer in this regard.

First, writers should face life squarely and listen carefully to the voice of the people. The policies of the Party must pass the test of practice and be corrected when they are wrong. When faced with the "two kinds of truth" that I referred to a moment ago, we writers must maintain a strong sense of responsibility to the people in reaching our conclusions. Our thinking must be dead serious, never rash, and always independent. We must never simply follow the crowd. The test of time has shown that all those literary works about peasant life in the late 1950's are dead today, whereas stories like those by Liu Zhen and Ru Zhijuan live on.

Second, some comrades apparently feel that literature's "delving into life" is simply a matter of writing about the dark side of society, to the exclusion of heroes of progressive characters. This is a misunderstanding. In varying times and under varying historical circumstances, progressive people must confront varying social problems. A writer cannot portray life separately from actual

society, even if he limits his heroes to model workers and war heroes. A writers cannot avoid taking a stance on the great social questions of the day. The several heroic characters that Ru Zhijuan and Liu Zhen have created in the two stories just mentioned are all assertive and courageous in protecting the interests of the masses--which are the same as the interests of socialism--and they all meet with some temporary setbacks. These heroes, who are genuinely part of the tide of history, have won the power to survive; the heroes in those other [overly romantic] literary works have by now lost this power.

Third, literature is a mirror. When the mirror shows us things in life that are not very pretty, or falls short of our ideals, it is wrong to blame the mirror. Instead we should root out and destroy those conditions that disappoint us. Mirrors show us the true appearance of things; literary mirrors speed the progress of society. Smashing a mirror is no way to make an ugly person beautiful, nor is it a way to make social problems evaporate. History has shown that it is better not to veil or smash literary mirrors. Isn't this truth all too clear from the extended period of time in which our realist tradition in literature was dragged toward an evil dead end? To forbid literature from delving into life, to deprive writers of their right to reflect on the problems of real life, and not to allow writers to speak for the people harms not only literature but the people and the Party as well. The period of literary history in which such things could happen has now come to an end, and a new chapter has begun. We hope no one will be pulling literature backward any more.

2. Answer the People's Questions

Our differing views on literary issues have always been bound up with our differing views on politics. And these two kinds of differing views have always derived from the question of how to interpret society and reality.

For example, as some comrades see it, Lin Biao and the Gang of Four did not actually wreak much havoc, and in fact there was no "ultra-leftist line." Others feel that the havoc and the criminal line of the Gang of Four have followed them into collapse and final extinction, and that the only problem remaining today is to get everybody to be productive together.

My view is that the tragedies brought on us by the Gang of Four have yet to be fully exposed, and that what has been exposed is yet to be fully comprehended. The Gang's "residual perniciousness" must not be conceived as something lifeless or static--something just

standing by, waiting to be swept away. It is a living social force, and it has its social base.

The perniciousness most worthy of our attention is the invisible kind. The Gang of Four has disrupted the organic workings of our Party and has damaged our social relations. They have created a highly abnormal relationship between our Party and the masses. What makes this matter so difficult to deal with is that many people, while not bad people in themselves, either knowingly or unknowingly have been protecting bad people. Superficially they are all Communist Party members or Party cadres; but every action they take serves only their vested interests and comes only from their own habits of thought. This is the very problem I pointed out in "People or Monsters?" It is not going to go away unless we deal decisively and finally with it.

At this point I would like to bring something to the attention of those comrades who feel that the primary duty of literature is to portray heroes. We are faced today with the ironic fact that heroes are in an awkward position. To do good deeds one has to offend people. One has to take risks and even make a bad name for oneself. When I did newspaper work in the 1950's I always found it hard to initiate criticism of a person. Now, in the late 1970's, I suddenly find it has become hard to praise a person. Take, for example, the case of Liu Jie, an inspector of the neighborhood registry on the Daxing'anling district of Heilongjiang, who was praised in the press for sticking to principles. She also had the support of the provincial Party committee. But it was precisely the commendation of the Party newspaper that brought calamity upon her, and the support of the provincial leadership was of no use in breaking the siege that befell her. There were even threats on her life. Now, if a true writer of the people were to interview this progressive young woman, there can be no doubt that he would soon find himself taking sides with her. He would join the battle against wickedness and help her win a more advantageous position. Only then would he turn to writing up her story. I feel strongly that only this kind of writer deserves the name "writer of the people."

To another group of comrades, those writers and critics who hold that it is the responsibility of literature to introduce modernization and construction, I would like to offer a different observation. The modernization of industry and agriculture is by no means simply a matter of adding new machinery. Human beings are still the mainstay of all productive forces, and the enthusiasm of people today still suffers many artificial constraints. This question deserves notice and additional study.

Methods of enterprise management that are modeled after the patriarchal family system, or after medieval practices or the ways of Genghis Khan, cannot possibly sustain a lasting rise in production. Militaristic methods and political incentives can, it is true, motivate workers over the short term; but as time wears on this approach is also doomed to failure. It is simply incompatible with the nature of modern industry. In history, the birth and development of modern industry has gone hand in hand with the liberation of human beings. This was a qualified liberation, of course. It grew out of the feudal serf system, in which people were bound in their social places. It gave to individuals freedom of their persons as well as certain political rights and legal guarantees of equality. As the individual came to feel he was an independent person, a free person, a person with a certain dignity and worth, a person equal with others before the law, gradually the ideas "personal character" and "individuality" came into being. Only when the individual attained this kind of status and this kind of consciousness did he begin to rely on himself and devote his talents to the improvement of his lot. The result was that productive forces in the period of capitalism exceeded those of the feudal period many times over. For socialism to exceed capitalism in productivity, it can and must provide even better conditions for human development and advancement. Management principles modeled on the feudal patriarchal system are a step backward from capitalism; they constrict people, inhibit them, and block their abilities and potential. It should go without saying that socialist modernization gains nothing from this.

It may seem that what I've been talking about falls into the realm of economics, but this is not the case. All this has to do with people, and therefore with literature. There are only two ways in which the feudal patriarchal style of leadership supports and extends itself. One is by coercion and command, and the other is by attack and retaliation. And both these methods, because they have, in contemporary political life, become common ways in which a minority can subdue the masses, warrents our closest vigilance. "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Without the supervision of the people, a good person will turn bad, and an honest official will turn corrupt.

We must answer the people's questions. We have no right to be auditors in the courtroom of history. The people are the judges, as well as the plaintiffs. We must help supply them with scripts. But before we provide answers, we must first learn. We must understand more about social life than the average person does.

One serious problem is that we still lack an accurate understanding of our own society. Our efforts to understand it have been suspended for many years. In recent times we have not had any sociology, political science, or legal or ethical studies worthy of the name "science." The kind of investigative research that Chairman Mao used to advocate has also been shelved for many years. A vast unknown world lies before us. Consider a few examples.

First, "class struggle." Everyone accepts that class struggle has been "expanded" for many years, but in fact, for a long period of time, the target of class struggle was completely misconceived. Its content and methods were also wrong. (In fact, it has been a distinguishing feature of our current historical period that mistakes continually repeat themselves.) Recently a new question has been raised: do classes really exist on our society? Some say they do not. Some say of course they do--just look at Wang Shouxin. Her case shows that after more than twenty years of "struggle," we still haven't figures out whom we ought to be struggling against.

Second, we have worked for more than twenty years at "socialist construction." Yet innumerable problems have dragged on without resolution, and in fact have gotten worse over time. This year our economists have identified the crux of the matter by raising the question of the goals of production under socialism: are we, in the final analysis, producing steel for the sake of steel, and petroleum for the sake of petroleum, or are these things for the people, aimed at satisfying their ever-increasing material and spiritual needs? It seems there are some individuals who do not agree that the goal of production should be to maximize satisfaction of the constantly increasing material and cultural needs of society as a whole.

Third, for many years now we have assigned top priority to "the human factor" in an unending political and ideological revolution. But after many years of this, people's enthusiasm not only has not increased--it has actually declined. This is another question to ponder. It is mystifying that this piece of land called China, always so inhospitable to the cultivation of "rightist opportunism," has nonetheless allowed revisionism with a "leftist" tag to grow so wild.

3. On "People or Monsters?" and Other Things

Our readers need literature with many different themes and styles. But they especially need writers who will serve as spokesman for the people, writers who will answer their questions

and express their demands by confronting the major issues of the day. The welcome for such writers is clearly evident in the spirited applause that plays like "Harbinger of Spring" and "Power Versus Law" have received, and in the wide readership that "People or Monsters?" has had. Some readers worry that "People or Monsters?", which exposes such massive problems, creates a negative or pessimistic mood in our readers, causing them to lose faith in our Party and our system. I have received a great number of thought provoking letters from readers of "People or Monsters?", and judging from these, there is no such danger. Their reader response is positive. The work triggers a burst of righteousness in people; it arouses the ardent wish of everyone who cares about our country to cure our illness and save our society. Some readers have even gone to Chairman Hua with concrete proposals for reform. But the opposition to "People or Monsters?" of course has been fierce, too. I have awoken to a hard fact: in today's China, if one speaks or writes and does not incur somebody's opposition, one might as well not have spoken or written at all. One has no alternative. The only alternative is to cower in a corner in a corner and fall silent. But if we do that, why live?

We are writing in the particular time and circumstances of China at the juncture between the 1970's and the 1980's. The needs of the times and the demands of the people must be our commands. Our role is necessitated by the inexorable development of history. We have no right to sidestep the immensely complex problems of our society. We must help our readers to understand our society more profoundly and accurately, and help them to rise in struggle for the complete realization of the great historical task of the Four Modernizations!

Appendix 5 Letter from BSFU

The following is a letter from the Beijing students who have protested during the winter and spring of 1989. It reveals some of the goals and criticisms which the students have with the government. Note that the students emphasize their peaceful qualities, and that they have repeatedly tried to solve their grievances using other methods.

Open Letter to Teachers and Students
of Beijing Foreign Studies University

Students Preparatory Committee
of BSFU

April 24, 1989.

Dear Teachers and fellow-students,

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for the students to bear the responsibility to protest against injustice and corruption to fight for democracy and freedom, a respect for human rights deems it right and justified for them to make a declaration of their strike. In order to respond to the joint action of all the colleges and universities in Beijing, to protest against police brutality inflicted upon students, and to demand a satisfactory reply to the "Seven Points of Petition, we declare, on behalf of all the BSFU students, "Strike!"

We are no riotous people and we are firmly against all kinds of chaos and robbery. People have seen these days, that the students participating in the activities mourning Hu Yao-bang and demanding democracy and freedom have tried their best to avoid any chaos. We have tried petition and sit-ins, and we even knelt down before their feet. Yet these peaceful actions have been answered with merciless whips and contempt. Neither our pride nor our conscience will tolerate this. We have little choice but to go on strike.

We expect a dialogue with the government; we demand the government officials be honest in performing their duties; we request the authority try every means to save and improve our national education, to speed up the advancement of democracy, to protect the people's democratic rights, and to push forward the

political and economic reform. We believe that only in this way can we Chinese people survive and prosper.

We are definitely for reform, resolutely against regression. We demand peace, we hate violence. We hope our just action will be understood and supported by all our teachers and students. *

* The mistakes in spelling and grammar were left as they appeared in the original copy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Barme, Geremie, and Minford, John (eds). Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience. Hong Kong: Far Eastern Economic Review, Ltd., 1986.
- Chau, W. C. (ed.) Prize-Winning Stories From China 1980-1981. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1985.
- Cheng, Nien. Life and Death in Shanghai. New York: Penguin Books, 1988.
- Chesneaux, Jean, Le Barbier, Francoise, and Bergere, Marie-Claire. China From the 1911 Revolution to Liberation. Translated by Paul Auster and Lydia Davis. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.
- Daubier, Jean. A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. New York: Vintage Books, 1974.
- Duke, Michael S. Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- _____. (ed.) Contemporary Chinese Literature An Anthology of Post Mao Fiction and Poetry. New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1985.
- Goldman, Merle. China's Intellectuals Advice and Dissent Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Hsien-yi, Yang, and Yang, Gladys (eds.) Selected Stories of Lu Hsun. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1978.
- Hoffer, Eric. The True Believer. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966.

Jicai, Feng. Chrysanthemums and Other Stories. Translated by Susan Wilf

Chen. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1983.

Kundera, Milan. The Book of Laughter and Forgetting. Translated by Michael Henry Heim. New York: Penguin Books, 1981. pp. 229-237.

Liang Heng, and Sharp, Judith. Cold Winds, Warm Winds Intellectual

Life in China Today. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1986.

Link, Perry. (ed.) Roses and Thorns The Second Blooming of the Hundred

Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

_____. (ed.) People or Monsters? Liu Binyan Bloomington: University

of Indiana Press, 1983.

Lowe, Donald M. The Function of "China" in Marx, Lenin, and Mao. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966.

Nathan, Andrew J. Chinese Democracy. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

Pye, Lucian W. China An Introduction. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984.

Schram, Stuart R. The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971.

_____. (ed.) Quotations From Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. New York:

Bantam Books, Inc., 1967.

Schurmann, Franz, and Schell, Orville. Republican China Nationalism, War,

and the Rise of Communism. New York: Vintage Books, 1967.

Thomas, Hugh. (ed.) Comrade Editor: Letters to the People's Daily.
Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1980.

Treadgold, Donald, W. ed. Soviet and Chinese Communism. Seattle:
University of Washington Press, 1976.

Wakeman, Frederic Jr. History and Will. Los Angeles: University of
California Press, 1973.

Wilson, Dick. The People's Emperor Mao: A Biography of Mao Tse-
Tung. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1980.

Yee, Lee (ed.) The New Realism. New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc,
1983.

Articles and Periodicals

Bady, Paul. "The Modern Chinese Writer: Literary Incomes and Best
Sellers."

The China Quarterly. 100 (December 1984): 645-657.

Binyan, Liu. "Stark Truth vs. 'False Realism': The Book That Stunned
Beijing." The New York Times Book Review. (November 6,
1988):
3,36.

Buruma, Ian. "The might of the pen." Far Eastern Economic Review.
(26
December 1985): 36-37.

Cheek, Tim. "Deng Tuo: Culture, Leninism and Alternate Marxism in
the
Chinese Communist Party." The China Quarterly. 96 (December
1983): 470-490.

"China protests unprecedented in 40 years of Communist rule." (AP)
Missoulian, 23, April 1989. pp. 1, A-8.

Chinnery, John. "Lu Xun and Contemporary Chinese Literature." The China Quarterly. 94 (June 1982): 411-423.

Chongwen, Xu. "Chinese views on Western Marxism." China Daily, Beijing.
 5 December 1988, p. 3.

Clark, Donald C. "Political Power and Authority in Recent Chinese Literature." The China Quarterly 102 (June 1985): 234-252.

Danchen, Chen. "Guidelines for Literature." Beijing Review. (May 25 - 31, 1987): 4.

Delfs, Robert. "Cool gusts menace the warm mood of liberalism." Far Eastern Economic Review. (26 December 1985): 45-47.

Elliott, Dorinda. "Intellectuals Are Waking Up." Newsweek. (March 6, 1989): 34.

Fewsmith, Joseph. "China's 13th Party Congress: Explicating the Theoretical Bases of Reform." Journal of Northeast Asian Studies Summer (1988): 41-64.

Goldman, Merle. Review of Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era, by Michael S. Duke. The China Quarterly 106 (June 1986): 166-169.

_____. "The Political Use of Lu Xun." The China Quarterly. 94 (June 1982): 446-461.

Hah, Chong-Do. "The Dynamics of the Cultural Revolution: an Interpretation Based on an Analytical Framework of Political Coalitions," WorldPolitics 24 (Ja 1972): 182-220.